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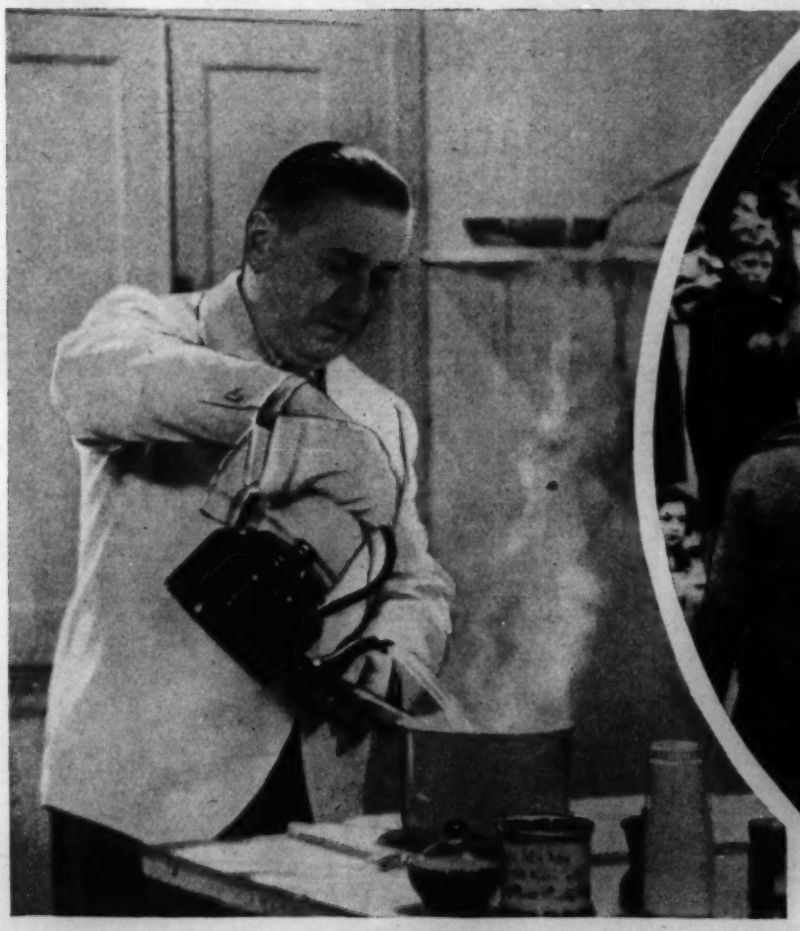

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AND TELEVISION PROGRESS
(INCORPORATING CINEMA QUARTERLY)

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by
DAVID CLEGHORN THOMSON
Ex-Director, Scottish Regional

Reith, the Man

Though one of the most discussed national figures to-day, Sir John Reith, Director-General of the B.B.C., is still a figure of mystery. It is of public importance that more should be known of the man who guides the destiny of so powerful a medium as British Radio. Here for the first time, is published an intimate character sketch by one of his own high officials.

IT is quite impossible to understand the policy of Portland Place or the essential quality of our radio service, in its good and bad aspects alike, without attempting to study the personality of the man who has controlled its destinies from its inception and moulded its growth to his tastes. And surely, with the possible exception of Mr. Montagu Norman of the Bank of England, there has been no character in public life since the War around whom so much controversy and mystery have centred. There are some who conceive of Sir J. C. W. Reith as a Mussolinic dictator, ever hungry for power, who "sets all hearts in the state to what tune pleased his ear." Others imagine him a covenanting idealist, a Praise-God Barebones dwelling on chill Olympic heights of motive, resolved to uplift the groundlings, "thus neglecting worldly ends, all dedicated to closeness and the bettering of my mind." A section of the public thinks of the Director-General as a veritable ogre of regimentation, fiercely paranoiac, secretly tapping telephones, listening at keyholes, breaking spirits and careers, banishing all save "yes men" from the immediate entourage of his trembling court. Yet Church dignitaries look upon him as a defender of the faith; the most eminent civil servant I know considers him the greatest public servant Britain has seen since the War. He is clearly the dominating force in a ship which is not yet a happy ship. What is the truth about this mysterious Scot?

One of the things which best mirrors the personality of Reith is the building in which the Corporation works. Peter Fleming described it as a cross between a liner and a lunatic asylum. From the sombre Roman sacrificial altar-front with its Latin inscription in the entrance hall, to the Director-General's private office, it all bears the stamp of a man with a complex make-up, but definite views and prejudices. Broadcasting House has an atmosphere different from that of a great newspaper office; different from the Royal Academy or the Imperial Institute. It is something between a modern University and a modernized Sing-Sing. There are bewildering and labyrinthine corridors, each one exactly like the other. When the uncouth swain first treads these passages, he may well feel the "shades of the prison-house" beginning to close around him. There is the Board Room, with its quasi-Egyptian mouldings, its romantic picture of Prospero and Ariel, and its high-backed red-leather chairs, so like the upholstery of the Upper Chamber—only newer. There is the array of modern *décor* and design, chromium steel and imitation leather-bound books flanking the panelled walls. This is the back-ground evolved by the executives against which the workers do their daily work.

The Director-General's own room is even more revealing. It is redolent of the atmosphere of a panelled, centrally-heated Fifth-Avenue Presbyterian manse study. A touch of stained glass, a portrait of the Chief's famous father, who was a Moderator of the United Free Church of Scotland, and, let into the wall, a rather sentimental picture of one of those scenes from which old Scotia's grandeur keeps on springing. But it would be unfair to stop here. On the great desk at which Reith works there stands (or stood at one time) a small woolly lamb, mutely striving to remind him that he is a human being

Reith—The Man (Contd.)

quite capable of unbending, and showing unexpected friskiness and simplicity on occasion. If Sir Stephen Tallents, who has rendered great service in the "projection of Empire," could only project this lamb throughout the staff, and even among the wider circle of listeners, some of the problems of the "unhappy ship" might not even arise for solution.

Let it not be supposed that this giant of the air has no human qualities lurking behind his forbidding, towering frame. During my own brief experience of work with him I saw him do one or two exceedingly kind and generous things. I have heard of great unbends on holiday treks, and have known of an exchange or two of good-humoured banter from time to time. The fact remains that Reith, as most of his staff see him in the system of office routine and secret dossiers, of sudden arrivals and hushed-up departures, is not a genial figure, not even a human figure, certainly not a lovable figure.

It must not be overlooked that in the early years of the service Reith did a great work. He had an inspired and inspiring obstinacy, common to Scots of his type, which kept the medium inviolate and made its controllers aim high, however little they comprehended the subtler implications of the force they were moulding and wielding. He undertook a gigantic task and displayed considerable powers of endurance, of negotiation, and even of vision. As Major Attlee said in the House: "He put up a splendid resistance to vested interests of all kinds. . . . He has set high standards." But, like many parents, he was unable to realize when patriarchal control ceased to be desirable after the maturity of his offspring. Like the hen and the duckling in the Hans Andersen fable, he was bewildered when the nestling he had fostered took to a new element. He was completely unable to understand or to control artistically temperamental people, or to tolerate constructive critics trying to co-operate in his task from within. And the B.B.C. had to carry "the heaviest crew of isolated intellectuals of any vessel in British waters."

"This Dominating Scot"

In her admirable little survey of Broadcasting in the Home University Library, Hilda Matheson thus sums up the types which go to make up the broadcasting staff:—

> "They are, on the whole, young rather than old, and include a high proportion of those who served in the War, but who, often on account of some awkward versatility, or some form of fastidiousness, idealism or general restlessness, never settled down to any humdrum profession after the war was over."

These are the people who fail to be shepherded, inspired, cribbed, cabined, and confined by this dominating Scot, who was himself an able and successful soldier. A man essentially shy, uneasy in society, yet avid of praise from its leaders, often bullying in negotiation, but charming in trouble, deprived of the benefits of a University education and perhaps unduly impressed by its hallmark; a man relatively untrained in the techniques of music or education, and yet not loth to generalize upon them; a man of iron nerve and splendid constitution, impatient of the ills that flesh is heir to. It is the direct result of his outlook that no stimulating body of critical opinion has ever sprung up in the Press, just as it is equally due to his presence that the majority of those who have really contributed constructively to the development of broadcasting from within have left the service after a series of troubled years punctuated by nervous breakdowns, rows, and compromises with authority.

From the *New Statesman* I must quote from a sketch of Reith, undoubtedly unkind, that explains much that is good and bad in the machine.

> "They say he is austere, a fanatical Puritan, in awe of Hell, yet suspecting Heaven; they say that his aloofness shows strength and character, but also that it is the defence of a timid Philistine; to some he seems a shrewd fighter; to others a weak, blustering neurotic. Some say, at least he is honest, others regard him as an uncompromising opportunist. But they really know nothing at all about him.
>
> "All they know for certain is that he is forty-four, a son of the Scottish Church, educated at Holt, an engineer by long apprenticeship, scarred in the War, and at thirty-three accounted Ambition's darling by his deliberate decision to make broadcasting a profession. An administrator and a technician, he was among the first to realise the potentialities of wireless: its direction is now in his hands by virtue of his own foresight and tenacity, not because anyone thought him a suitable arbiter of public taste.
>
> "We may, of course, learn something from his public appearances. From Low you see him, a great black tower of a man, one eye burning fiercely, one a little scarred, mouth moulded in a cynical No. His smile is so rare and so lovely that the humanity it discovers seems a mirage. As for his words, inconsistent philosophy and unsound sociology jostle in his throat. Did he once make a scornful jest of democracy and brand the average Briton an enfeebled moron? In the next sentence he expresses complete satisfaction at the spectacle of England's glorious future in charge of these poor sons.
>
> "There is not much to learn that way. Impossible to pilfer opinions from his intimates. He has no intimates and few friends. Futile to pump his staff. They do not know him, nor he them.
>
> "But by their works ye shall know them. Look, then, at the British Broadcasting Corporation. Two factors have gone to its making: experiment and discipline. Experiment there has been in plenty, in administration, in personnel, in programme-building. The Director-General must often have had the profitable experience of watching others burn their fingers. His own he does not burn. He is a master of the methods of indirect rule. Discipline there is for all who work for the Corporation: discipline in long hours, in anonymity, in unrecognised and unrewarded effort. For the Director-General, it is said, does not believe in praise; blame is his chosen incentive.*
>
> "Consider some of his experiments—Broadcasting House, for instance. Himself no lover of the arts, as the mixed oak and mahogany of his own room show, he yet consented to the erection of a modern building (not too modern), to carvings (Gill, not Epstein), to decorations studiously functional. Or look at his staff. Gifted amateurs, many of them, chosen autocratically. First-class ability is not encouraged and is apt to leave the Corporation. . . . The Director-General is not himself an educated man, but he believes in the medicinal effect of education, and so he sponsors an educational programme arranged by those who have received the benison of Oxford or Cambridge. A cultural dictatorship, some say. But, however tolerant or liberal the Talks are, and however generously the Director-General dispenses progressive thought in art, science, and philosophy, with his left hand, with his right he is tied to the *status quo*. . . . No man of iron, but supreme in the art of effective compromise."

This sketch of Sir John Reith will be published in the book "Radio is Changing Us," by David Cleghorn Thomson. (Watts, July 15th).

"The Frustrated Idealist"

To my mind there is a strange conflict within Reith's personality—various ideas and ideals are forever warring for mastery within him, and this produces a constant inconsistency. At one moment he is the frustrated idealist hating to be misunderstood. He is like Grosvenor, in Gilbert's "Patience":

> "*Grosvenor:* I assure you, if you could only suggest some means whereby, consistently with my duty to society, I could escape these inconvenient attentions, you would earn my everlasting gratitude. . . . I can't help that. I am a man with a mission. And that mission must be fulfilled."

The next moment he is secure in the sense of an ingenious compromise which he imagines will please everybody and alienate no one. He has ceased to be the missionary and is playing the Machiavelli: he is like Bunthorne in Gilbert's "Patience":

> "*Bunthorne:* All that is changed. I have reformed. I have modelled myself upon Mr. Grosvenor. Henceforth, I am mildly cheerful. My conversation will blend amusement with instruction; but my æstheticism will be of the most pastoral kind."

While I was working under Reith, I used from time to time to be reminded strongly of certain phrases in the paraphrases with which all sons of the manse are familiar, more particularly the one about the Rock of Ages standing supreme in wisdom as in power:—

> "Though him thou canst not see nor trace
> The working of his hands."

And again:—

> "According as his labours rise
> So his rewards increase—"

But no one could ever apply in this case the concluding couplet:—

> "His ways are ways of pleasantness
> And all his paths are peace."

* This is not in my experience true at all.

EDITORIAL

Either — or

"I LEFT ENGLAND with depression over the film industry," said Mr. Korda, recently interviewed on the new £1,200,000 tie-up with United Artists, "and found Hollywood on the top of a wave. Never has there been such aggressive spending, salaries have never been bigger; a million dollars is a moderate price for a film and they are getting their money back. In 1930-31 six of the major film companies in Hollywood were in the hands of receivers. Now only one is, and we get criticised because we spend £150,000 on a film. We have got to stand on our feet, and now it is certain that our productions will be sold in all parts of the world. Every picture will have American distribution."

With the immediate panic of crisis over, the British film industry takes thought for the morrow. From the sorrowful analysis of past losses two schools of thought emerge, each putting forward a policy for the future. We quote Mr. Korda's announcement because it crystallises one of them. This school seeks to create an export industry relying for success on costly production and international capital. It maintains that the secret of American success is an assured international market and that the acquisition of such a market for Britain depends, at least in part, on the creation of higher quality and appeal by lavish production expenditure. Perchance its belief may be justified, though it is evidently necessary to repeat the somewhat elementary warning that "aggressive spending" without a directive sense of producership makes neither for æsthetic value nor economic sanity. Mr. Korda quotes the American film crisis of 1930; the reasons for that crisis (so far as they can be disentangled from the wider chaos of the time) have been generally attributed to the drop in production quality following the ousting of the showmen by the financiers. And the British cinema is still short of that first-rate showmanship on which large sums can be risked.

There is another point that this school of thought might take from the implications of American movie history. A million dollars may, as Mr. Korda says, at the present time be a moderate price for a Hollywood film: but the growth of efficiency in American production methods has made it reasonably certain that the major proportion of the cost will appear on the screen. Even the most cautious critics of the British production system are agreed that its present plight was largely brought about by failures of organisation. In the more violent camps extravagance, waste and the expense of indecision have been added to the charge-sheet. But even if we accept only the most moderate evidence on this score we must look with grave doubt on the large-scale production figures already announced for next year until we have an assurance that the British studios have learnt how to allocate money. So far this assurance has not been given. Failure to secure foreign markets has, with due pomp, been pronounced the cause of the crisis. Perhaps that is only one of the causes. Others may lie nearer home.

The first school of thought thus puts forward a policy essentially similar to that which has led to the present débâcle. It is a policy calling for new and heavy financial commitments and fraught with the dangers of repeated miscalculation.

The second policy seeks equally to create an international market, but at the same time to build up an industry working within the economic limits of the independent British market should the wider fields of sale not materialise. It maintains that the cure for the present trouble lies in the elimination of luxury, the avoidance of unnecessary spectacle and a heavy cut in the fantastic salaries of stars and executives. It holds that with this better sense of proportion and organisation simple and effective films could be made for as little as twelve thousand pounds, and that, given the elements of imagination and character, there is nothing to prevent the production of first-class ambitious films for fifty to sixty thousand pounds. This proposal is founded on the belief that the makings of a successful British cinema are now established and that with the coming of a new and effective personnel of production control, an industry carrying the guarantee of native vitality is within easy reach. Courage and leadership in re-organisation and experiment are the necessary conditions of its creation.

The Government proposes . . . .

THE BOARD OF TRADE'S proposals for new protective legislation for the film industry have been indicated, though they are not regarded by the Board as final and definite. Further criticism and guidance are invited.

The proposals impose a 20 per cent Quota of British films on renters and provide for an increase to 30 per cent. Separate quota is suggested for short films. Ten per cent of the short films handled by renters and 5 per cent of the short films shown by exhibitors must be British. Long films if they are to rank for quota must cost a minimum of £15,000, and films costing £45,000 and over are permitted to rank double quota.

No provision is made for the setting up of a Film Commission. This suggestion of the Moyne Committee that an independent body with Government appointed personnel should guide the affairs of the industry, disappears.

The Board of Trade has had the hard task of reconciling the various and opposing interests of renter, exhibitor and producer and everyone who knows the fierce and pandemoniac politics of the film trade must respect the Board's powers of endurance. But even now it may not be too late for the small voice of the independent to be heard.

The proposals mean fewer films. May this not put a bludgeon in the hand of the American renter and the circuit exhibitor to be used against the independent exhibitor? The cost limit at £15,000 is higher than one may safely get back in an independent market. May this not put a bludgeon in the hand of the big operators, to be used against the independent producer?

Does a 10 per cent—5 per cent quota of British shorts represent anything but lip-service to this valuable and essentially independent section of the industry? The shorts producer faces a dumped market in which most of the films are given as throw-aways with the feature film. At present he can justify the expenditure of only £500 on a two reel film. Will a quota of one in twenty allow him to escape from these poverty stricken conditions of production? Will it permit him to make more films? We doubt it.

Of the disappearance of the Commission from the proposals, we need only say this. The hope of creating a reasonable public spirited policy within the film industry has disappeared with it.

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No Real Crisis

The Diary of a Clapper Boy

by J. R.

"I meet an Englishman"

Feb. 5th. After three months' fruitless search for job, got idea of going into films. Morning paper mentioned rising British Film Industry and that we would soon capture the American market. So, may be, there's a place for me too. And think of all the stars one could see. I'm going to try, anyway.

Feb. 9th. Studio manager said he was sorry, but there was no vacancy. Anyhow that's what I thought he said. Man had very peculiar accent, perhaps he's a foreigner.

Feb. 21st. Been in seven more studios. No luck. Same accents.

March 10th. Hurrah! I got a job!! I am going to be a clapper boy. I don't quite know what I shall have to do, but they said it wasn't sitting in cinemas and clap. Why worry?

March 11th. We are supposed to start shooting to-morrow. To-day I went round the camera room.

March 12th. Waiting all day. No shooting.

March 13th. Same as yesterday. They say the script isn't ready.

March 14th. Still waiting. To-day I saw a man in white flannels playing marbles in the corridor. Thought he was an extra who had been kept waiting too long. But was told he's our producer. Can't quite imagine what he can produce that way.

March 15th. I'm used to waiting now. Will there ever be shooting? They say now, they don't like the script. But it didn't matter, once the treatment was ready, they would all love it. The film is going to be called: "One-way Street to Paradise." Sounds romantic, doesn't it?

We're off

March 17th. We're off! We are shooting!! We are doing artistes' tests!!

March 18th. Still doing tests.

March 19th. Tests again.

March 20th. We are waiting again. The treatment is ready but they don't like it either. They are not worrying however, the "rushes," they say, will show them all!

Marsh 21st. To-day we were going to shoot the first scene. But the director didn't like the flowers outside his private office. They distract him instead of inspiring him. He insisted on personally supervising the flowers being changed. There aren't many flowers this time of the year, so there was no shooting to-day.

March 22nd. We did shoot. Not only that, but we're going to shoot to-morrow as well although it is Sunday. Most of the unit are fed-up after having mucked about all week and now they have to work on Sunday. But the Production Manager came on the set at lunch time and said that we have to compete with America and, therefore, would have to make an extra effort and work on Sunday. Sounds a bit mad after waiting all that time, but may be, he's right. If we want to capture the American market we will probably have to work extra hard. So I'm going to do my share of Sunday clapping.

No Oranges on Sunday

March 23rd. We were shooting again. Close-ups of our leading lady. The director shouted at her because she didn't turn up until lunch time. But she said she couldn't get any oranges on a Sunday morning and she could only work after orange juice.

March 24th. Monday. No shooting to-day. They saw the rushes and they don't like the look of the leading lady.

March 25th. We're doing tests again.

March 26th. Waiting all day.

March 27th. We are shooting again. The new leading lady is very young and pretty and they say she's going to be a hit.

March 28th. They thought the rushes were marvellous. She is going to be a "hit."

March 29th. No shooting to-day. The leading lady didn't like the dialogue. They want her to say: "How could you ever think such a thing, Jim?" She says it sounds silly. At lunch time the script-writer came down but he couldn't understand what it was all about because he can't speak English very well. They are having a conference.

March 30th. Sunday. No shooting. I feel as I have been in the films for ages. There is something about the whole thing. But not much! It's like a disease. You are fed-up and still you can't get rid of it. I met another Englishman yesterday. He is doing the sound. He says he doesn't really know how he got in there, but perhaps it was because the Americans thought he was German.

March 31st. We're off again! They changed the dialogue from: "How could you ever think such a thing, Jim?" into: "Jim, how could you ever think such a thing?"

April 7th. We have been shooting for a week. To-morrow they are going to see the first "rough cut."

April 8th. They didn't like the rough cut. "It stinks," they said. The cutter said it's the fault of the script. The script-writer didn't say anything because he couldn't understand the cutter. So they're going to alter the script.

April 9th. No shooting. They are altering the script.

April 11th. We are shooting again. They changed the script. Our leading lady's part is very small now, but they say she's going to be a "hit" all the same.

April 12th. She's a "hit" all right. She hit the assistant director in the face after reading the new script and walked out. Now they've got to look for another leading lady, I suppose.

April 14th. We are doing tests again.

April 15th. We started retaking all the scenes with our new leading lady. They all like her much better.

April 16th. We saw the rushes with the new leading lady. She is marvellous.

April 17th. There was a big row to-day. The old leading lady came back and insisted on getting her part back. They are having a conference.

April 18th. Something funny must have happened. We are having a third leading lady who nobody has seen before. The director calls her "Darling" and nobody knows what has happened to the other two.

April 28th. We have been shooting for a week without interruption. Everything seems to run very smoothly.

April 29th. It ran too smoothly. No shooting to-day. They're having contract trouble. The leading man's contract is up and he's back on his old one. The leading lady has got Wednesday off and the rest of the time when the leading lady is free, he is on the wireless, except on Saturday when she is doing television. So they somehow don't seem to get together. It seems sad. They have just fallen in love in the last scene we shot.

April 30th. No shooting.

May 1st. We are going on location to-morrow until the contract trouble is over.

May 2nd. We are on location. It is raining. No shooting.

May 3rd. It is still raining. I learnt poker to-day. We are going back to the studio to-morrow to line up for shooting inside.

May 4th. Sunday. We are shooting inside. The sun is shining. The studio manager made another speech and we are shooting some back projection. We are going back on location to-morrow.

May 12th. We were on location for a week. We got a few shots in between showers. To-day we are back in the studio. The contract trouble seems to be over.

May 13th. We started shooting again. After the first shot a dispute developed between the director and the leading lady, about a scene. She said that in her part she was an innocent girl and therefore couldn't smile when she read in the paper that the leading man had got a divorce. The director gave her a nasty look and said she shouldn't "kid herself." He wants her to smile at all costs. At lunch time the producer came on the set and said she should laugh hysterically and not smile at all. They are having a conference.

May 14th. Thank Goodness, the 13th is over. They are shooting the scene three ways, once as the leading lady, once as the director and once as the producer wants it.

May 15th. They saw yesterday's rushes and decided to "cut" the scene altogether. It is misleading the audience, they said.

May 19th. Last week of shooting. We are doing big close-ups. The leading lady is called in the morning. The leading man in the afternoon. They are not supposed to know of one another's close-ups.

May 23rd. The two stars met in the restaurant at lunch time and had a big row when they found out about the close-ups.

May 24th. We finished shooting and are going to have a three-days' holiday.

May 26th. We were called back to the studio for retakes. They saw a first cut of the picture and thought it was terrible. There is

" The rushes were out of focus . . . the cameraman blamed hay-fever "

tension in the air. We were told to keep in touch with the office. Something's going to happen.

May 29th. Something terrible has happened. A Dairy Farm has invested money in the Company and they are turning "One Way Street to Paradise" into a propaganda film for milk production. There was a riot on the set to-day. Everybody shouting at everybody, and threatening to walk out. The script-writer wept and shouted repeatedly several swear words he had learnt during the making of the picture. Eventually the producer came on the set and made a speech. Nobody should worry, he said, because at last they had found the "comic relief" which the picture had lacked all the time. Personally I thought it had lacked everything but that!

June 2nd. We're on location shooting cows. (Real ones!) It is lovely weather.

June 3rd. We saw the rushes. They were all out of focus. The cameraman said it was his hay-fever. He got the sack and said he was going down to the sea. I wish I had hay-fever too. General tension is growing. Everybody seems fed-up.

June 10th. We have finished shooting. They are busy "cutting" now.

June 20th. They saw a final cut of the picture and said it was lousy. But they say they couldn't possibly judge it without the music.

Thought it Terrible

June 30th. They saw the picture with the music and still thought it was terrible. But they don't worry. The "dissolves" and "fades" will make all the difference.

July 11th. The "dissolves" and "fades" made no difference. Now they say they can't judge it by the "cutting copy" and they are waiting for the first combined print.

July 15th. They saw the print and said the picture smells. But they can't really judge it on a small screen.

July 18th. They saw the picture on a big screen at midnight and think it is impossible. As they were all tired they say they couldn't judge it. Especially in an empty cinema. The audience will make all the difference. Let's hope it will.

July 25th. To-night the picture will be trade shown. I pinched tickets and shall go with my girl friend.

July 26th. The trade-show was a terrific success. They had a marvellous Mickey Mouse. The atmosphere has changed. They all think it's a grand film.

July 29th. They are afraid the Ministry of Transport might object to the picture being called "One Way Street to Paradise," They are going to change its name.

" The Happy Roundabout "

August 14th. To-morrow will be the première of "The Happy Roundabout"—that is the new name.

August 16th. The première is over. To-day they are suddenly allfed-up again and don't like the picture. It appears that somebody started a lawsuit against the Company saying that the script was based upon an advertisement which appeared some years ago in a French telephone directory. The director is going on a long holiday.

August 26th. We are going to start on a new film on the 1st of September.

Sept. 1st. Waiting all day. No shooting.

Sept. 2nd. Same as yesterday. They say the script isn't ready.

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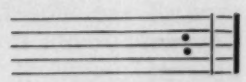
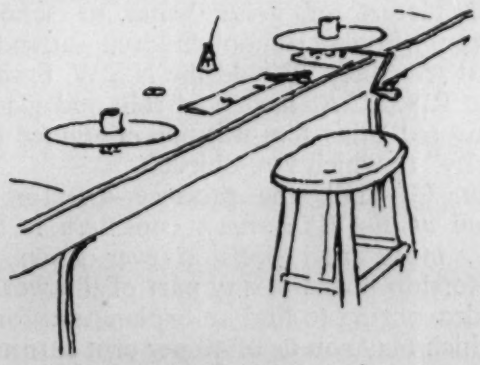




(*Drawings by Max Anderson*)

Miss Rosamund Smith

Brooke Wilkinson

Lord Tyrrell

AN OPEN LETTER FROM AUSTRALIA TO

By Mrs. K. M. P. Stone, film critic, "Film Weekly," Sydney

THE banning by you of the Australian film *Orphan of the Wilderness* has literally astounded the film lovers of Australia. That it should be on the grounds of "cruelty to animals" is more astounding still; for no weaker grounds could have been chosen, nor none more hypocritical. It is so well-known nowadays to even the layman that scenes of apparent cruelty on the screen practically never take place in reality, that it is quite impossible that you can be ignorant of this fact.

The scenes objected to by the Board, which banned *Orphan of the Wilderness* from being exhibited in Great Britain until such scenes were removed, were, the burning of the kangaroo star Chut's nose with a cigarette, leaving a scar on it; thrashing a kangaroo and preventing a kangaroo from being able to get a drink of water. All perpetrated in the picture by a sadistically minded animal "trainer." Every one of these scenes was carefully and cleverly faked by the producer. Not one of the animals received any harm or hurt.

An Educational Picture

You are making yourselves ridiculous in the eyes of the world. This very film—as condemned by your Board—was given the wholehearted approval and co-operation of the New South Wales R.S.P.C.A., as an educational picture of great value to school-children! Public school-children attended special screenings. Would the N.S.W. branch of the R.S.P.C.A. have so freely and gladly "sponsored" this film if it had contained the "cruelty" to which YOU object?

Ken. G. Hall, the producer-director of *Orphan of the Wilderness*, considers it the ". . . most cruel decision ever given by a censorship board in any part of the world. In endeavouring to find an explanation for a fiat which may rob us of 40 per cent earnings which the Australian film production business has a right to expect from the British market, I can only imagine the English Board of Film Censors knows pathetically little of cinema technique.

A Vivid Sermon

"*Orphan* received the stamp of official approval of the R.S.P.C.A., *leading members of which were often in the studio when the animal sequences were made*. The film seeks to teach a lesson to people who do not realise their responsibilities to dumb animals. The censored sections—carefully 'faked'—give point to a vivid sermon against cruelty. As an animal lover myself I made it my personal responsibility to see that not one animal or kangaroo we used suffered for a second. The British Board of Film Censors cannot apparently know that *Orphan of the Wilderness* has been selected by the New South Wales, Victorian and Queensland State Education Departments as one of three official 'school pictures' of the year because of its educational value?

"I would suggest," adds Mr. Hall, "that England, the country in which foxes are harried and torn to death in the name of sport, the country in which the Grand National Steeplechase is cynically referred to as the 'Grand Crashional,' because of the numbers of unfortunate horses which are battered in the race each year, should take a reflective look at the Grand National newsreels.* I remember one passed by the British Board of Film Censors, in which thirty horses started, two finished. I felt physically ill at the finish. Evidently the British Censors think that an English horse breaking his neck is excellent screen fare—but a kangaroo with a scar PAINTED on his nose is revolting."

If you are—you British Board of Film Censors—so extremely sensitive to even faked scenes of cruelty, why don't you use your powers to get those nauseating and physically revolting newsreels of the "Grand Crashional" horserace suppressed? You would then be doing a fine job of really banning actual film scenes of physical cruelty.

I am a hard-boiled film critic of many years' standing and to preserve my own mental stability I have been obliged to harden my heart to many tender emotional and heart-breaking screen episodes. But one thing I can never witness without throbs of pity and indignation is the sequences of the "Grand Crashional," with its wreckage of human and animal victims, which you so readily and regularly pass as fit for public screen consumption. Some people are compelled to shut their eyes when these are shown in the theatre—others leave the theatre to avoid it, going out with a sickened heart.

Those who Condone "Sport"

Those English people who condone this so-called "sport" and you the Censor Board which passes its presentation* should be thoroughly ashamed of its cruelty—not faked, but deplorably real.

Adding insult to injury you reject a really beautiful film like *Orphan of the Wilderness*. At times I have been compelled to sit through various dull and boring British films, in pursuance of my duties as film critic—this indeed is "cruelty to animals." You, however, appear to have no desire to ban any British films because their quality is far below what they should be.

Incidentally in a previous Cinesound Australian picture, *Thoroughbred*, a couple of cleverly faked scenes in which a star racehorse was concerned, depicting burning stables—and which you demanded eliminated owing to an apparent act of "cruelty"—also threw a sabot into your temperamental works.

Could it be you who passed *David Copper-*

**Newsreels in Britian are not censored by the B.B.F.C. —Ed.*

(These photographs were taken outside the Censor's Office. The Board would not identify them.)

THE BRITISH BOARD OF FILM CENSORS

field with its decidedly sadistic scenes? Why one judgment for British film producers and separate treatment for Australian? What about the scores of other films—American rodeos in countless newsreels and Western features—don't they count as cruelty to animals?

I indite The British Board of Film Censors as being very obviously incompetent for your jobs. At least you should be consistent and be endowed with the elemental knowledge of technical film producing—and faking!

K. M. P. STONE

from Ida McAulay

(our regular correspondent)

THERE has been considerable comment out here upon British Censorship of recent Australian films.

In *Thoroughbred* the sequence showing horses in a burning stable was deleted on the ground that it depicted cruelty to animals. The same reason was given for cutting a scene from *Orphan of the Wilderness* in which a kangaroo is allegedly ill-treated. Those who are interested in film work in Australia are asking how much was excluded in England on the same grounds from the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer picture *Sequoia*, or from the Fox film *Smoky*, and the Warner Bros. production *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, in which last cruelty to horses must have been actual, not merely implied.

When interviewed regarding the cuts in *Orphan of the Wilderness*, Mr. Ken. G. Hall. the director of the film, said, among other things, "I can say to the English Censors that every one of the animals that worked in *Orphan of the Wilderness* is happy and back in its natural habitat," and he continued:—

"The basic factors of drama are life and death, joy and sorrow together and in contrast. If one makes a story of animals into a motion picture those elements must be dealt with to make a narrative, and perhaps, leave a message. The message that *Orphan of the Wilderness* left behind it—and I have dozens of letters and personal words to prove it—was one of kindness to animals. Towards the end of the picture we saw men fighting among themselves merely to protect an animal."

He concluded by suggesting that the uncensored version of this film should be shown to the newspaper men of Fleet Street. "If these men say the message of this picture is one of callousness and brutality I will gladly eat the whole 8,000 feet of it," he said.

It is interesting to note the attitude of various responsible bodies in Australia towards this film. The Education Departments in several States made it an official picture for exhibition to school children, and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals endorsed the film as one that would encourage kindness to animals, especially to Australian native fauna, and expressed the opinion that it exposed cruelty that is present, all too frequently, in the training and treatment of performing animals.

The two films mentioned above are not the only Australian productions to be censored in England. In *Rangle River* the climax in which two men fought with stockwhips was entirely deleted by the English censors. Incidentally this was almost the only realistic scene in the whole film.

Mr. Cecil Mason, General Manager of Columbia Pictures Proprietary Ltd., whose company made the film, when asked for his opinion regarding this action, replied that it was not the policy of his company to comment upon the action of Censors or Government Officials. Less responsible people, however, are vocally surprised that such films as *Rasputin* or *Winterset* should have been shown in England at all when such a comparatively mild scene in *Rangle River* has been so severely handled.

Censorship in Australia

It appears that The Commonwealth Film Censorship censors all moving picture films which are imported into or exported from the Commonwealth of Australia, but it has no control over films made and exhibited in Australia until it is sought to export them. The censorship also censors advertising and publicity matter imported into Australia, but has no control over local advertising. New South Wales, South Australia and Victoria have censorship over films that have been allowed by the Commonwealth, but do not often exercise this power, though New South Wales rigidly excludes all "bushranging" stories in spite of the fact that it does not interfere with gangster pictures.

The regulations under which Commonwealth Censorship operates provides that in respect to imported films no film shall be registered which, in the opinion of the Censorship Board (a body consisting of three persons, two men and one woman, in which the Chief Censor has a deliberative, but not a casting vote, and the decision of the majority prevails), or, on appeal the opinion of the Appeal Censor—

(*a*) is blasphemous, indecent or obscene;
(*b*) is likely to be injurious to morality, or to encourage or incite to crime;
(*c*) is likely to be offensive to the people of any friendly nation;
(*d*) is likely to be offensive to the people of the British Empire;
(*e*) depicts any matter the exhibition of which is undesirable in the public interest.

The fact that whereas two or three years ago the normal number of feature films that had to be cut used to average about 50 per cent, last year it was only 24 per cent, is attributed by the Censorship partly to the Legion of Decency Campaign in America which was begun in 1934, and partly to public taste, which made the cleaner and more decent films pay better. The percentage of British films rejected last year was more than twice that of the American, with a higher percentage of cuts.

TIMES CHANGE

-so does SHELL

Shell has always been a contemporary spirit. It belongs to 1937 as much as it belonged to 1907. Between these years lies a big difference made up of countless small improvements, each of which was made immediately it became desirable and possible. If, in the Autumn, you buy a 1938 car, you will find that Shell suits it perfectly; for Shell keeps in step with motor-car design.

YOU CAN BE SURE OF SHELL

Buck Jones—"The Phantom Rider"

TO BE CONTINUED

The Serial Adventures of Buck Jones, Tom Mix and Tailspin Tommy

by Gordon Hales

THERE may be quite a number of people who don't realise that the days of *The Perils of Pauline* are not past. Film serials still form an integral part of the programmes of certain cinemas. These cinemas usually occupy a minor status in provincial towns, and may be found tucked away down little side streets, with a conspicuous absence of neon lighting, stills pinned on crudely painted boards, and a six-sheet colour poster on either side of the entrance. Their audiences are composed mainly of "regulars," and attendances, therefore, do not vary much. That the serial helps to maintain this regular audience, there can be but little doubt, particularly with regard to the children, who practically fill the places every Saturday afternoon. They have followed each chapter from the first, and will follow each succeeding episode to the end, when they will discuss excitedly the prospects of the next serial.

Universal are the big producers of serials. They have now in distribution: *Secret Agent X9* (a detective story), *Flash Gordon* (a trip to Mars), *Jungle Jim*, *Ace Drummond*, *Phantom Rider*, and various Buck Jones cowboy films.

On the average they do about four fifteen-episode serials a year. They say serials are now becoming really high-class and very popular and they hope very soon to enter the cinema circuit fields. These films are most popular at children's matinees.

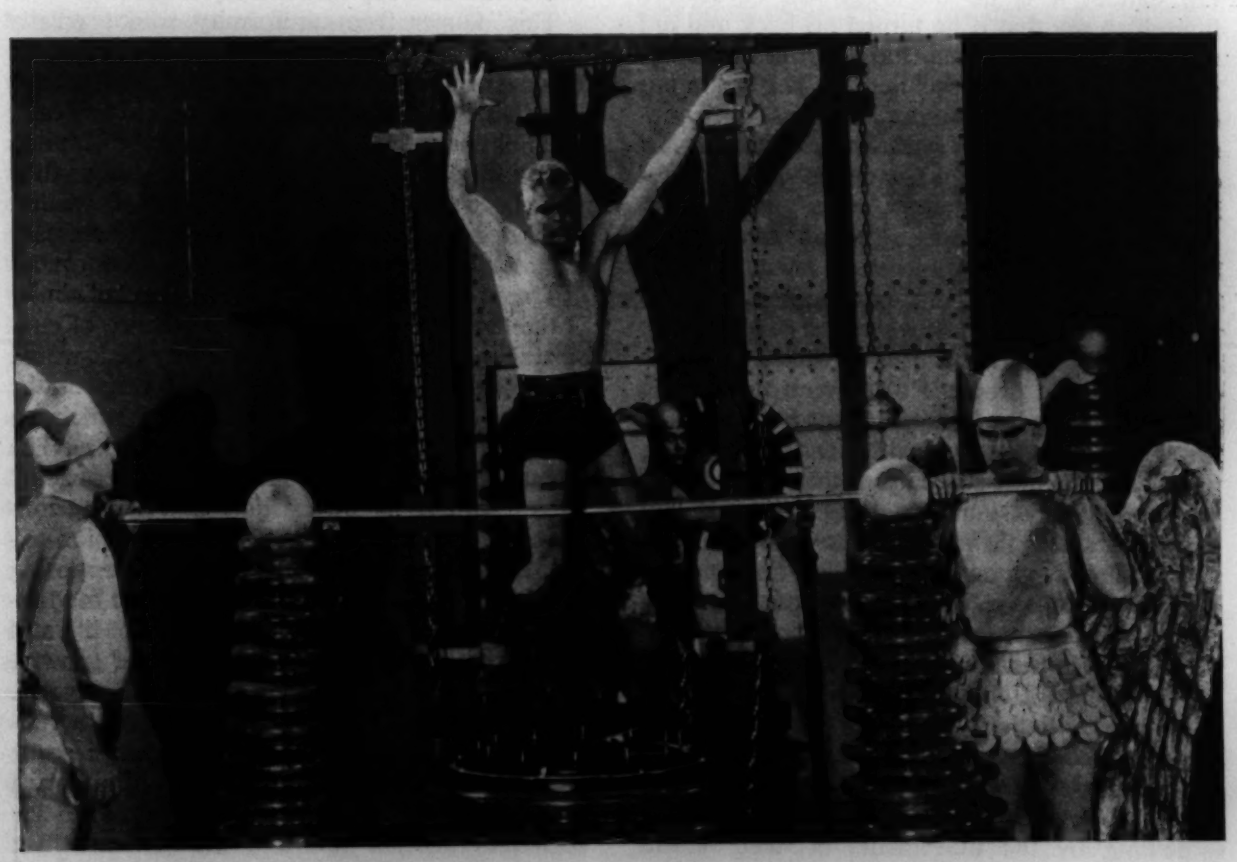
Columbia is also one of the few companies producing serials. They have four starting production, but names are not yet available.

Serials seem to vary but little in quality, although their popularity is more sharply divided. The names of Buck Jones and Tom Mix ensure success. Tailspin Tommy appears in some Great Air Mystery or other, and his adventures, so painfully and obviously protracted, are eagerly followed. Other serials enjoy a more dubious success. *The Amazing Adventures of the Clutching Hand—In* 15 *Thunderbolt Chapters* turns out to be bitterly disappointing, and although it is followed by the "regulars" with some display of interest, one can sense the absence of enthusiasm normally manifested by the bursts of applause and the muttered speculations as to what will happen next.

The details of the serial's style do not seem to change much. There is the usual main title: *The Adventures of Rex and Rinty*, *The Mystery Squadron*, *Custer's Last Stand*. The credit titles, the interesting and consistent feature of which is the exceptional number of people who seem to have been engaged in each department of the film's construction. At least four people write the scenario; not less than two are responsible for the photography, and the editing is always divided among several. Then there are various executive producers, and the director himself, who more often than not is two persons. The title of the particular chapter about to be screened follows. This is never prosaic. *The Black Ace Strikes*, *A Desperate Chance*, *The Final Stand* are the sort of things to be found. Next comes a résumé of the events contained in the previous episodes, often illustrated with stills of the main characters as they take their place in the development of the plot, and nearly always very badly expressed. These synopses almost invariably end with a word like 'but' or 'when' followed by a few significant dots. At this point the title is ripped off the screen by a particularly violent form of wipe, and the audience is transported slap into the last minute or so of the previous week's chapter.

The crucial moment arrives. Let's say that the hero, one John Blake, crumples up under a rain of bullets, and a demoniacal laugh is heard. (At this point the episode of the week before was rudely interrupted by a title bearing an enormous question mark and the question: "What happened to John Blake? See Chapter 9 showing at this theatre next week.") Chapter 9 leaves John Blake crumpled up on the ground for only a second or two, since he gets up and informs his companion that he would have been killed, if it hadn't been for his bullet-proof waistcoat. By such a series of anti-climaxes is each episode given an excuse to continue.

Sometimes the serial cheats. The hero may be seen falling off the edge of a cliff at the end of one chapter. At the beginning of the next, the sequence is found to have been re-edited, and an incident may occur at the same time and place as the apparent doom of the hero, which results in his being easily saved. Such obvious frauds, which are frequent, are not too kindly received by audiences. Yet serials continue to be followed with every semblance of interest. Perhaps this is maintained by speculation as to what the future naïve swindles will be.



Buster Crabbe in Universal's Serial on a Trip to Mars

WORLD OPINION

Philosophy of Dancing

IT HAPPENED THAT JUST before I went to the French Casino I had seen a Hindu dancer, Uday Shan-Kar, and had also read in an interview with him that American tap dancing had not impressed him at all until he saw the movies of Fred Astaire. So in my mind I had three different ideas on dancing simultaneously. Every step taken by Shan-Kar and his troupe and every gesture they make goes back to some ritual or some folk-habit foreign to us, and yet the entire effect has only the kind of strangeness which is enchanting. The dances which tell stories have plots which remind you of grand opera librettos or the translations of songs: "Three young girls who, while gathering flowers, are troubled by bees; and when they go bathing are suddenly frightened away by the sound of approaching footsteps." And the beginning of a very elaborate one: "The drama opens with the chorus lauding Shiva and his divine wife, Sati. Shiva is the God of Creation and Destruction. His dance creates and destroys the universe. Sati, who symbolises conjugal fidelity, dies of the grief she suffered when her own father mortally offended Shiva. Shiva, in deep affliction, retires into solitude and falls into a state of meditation, so that all creation is at a standstill."

These things do not matter. I have come in late and watched one of Shan-Kar's dances without the faintest knowledge of the story he was conveying and found that I understood it nearly enough, just as I think an Oriental would understand perfectly everything that Ray Bolger was saying in his superb dance at the end of *On Your Toes*. About tap dancing I am not so sure because I am not sure that tap dancing ever tries seriously to communicate anything except itself. There comes a moment in the movies when Mr. Astaire is turned down and he does a tap dance and there comes a moment when he is elated and he does a tap dance: it is no disparagement of Astaire himself to say that if he turned his back and did the two dances, you would hardly know which was gay and which sad. At its point of perfection tap dancing has all the beauty of a chemical or mathematical formula which works out perfectly. It is a diagram—and there are few things more satisfying.

What has really happened is this: tap dancing has become an instrument of percussion. In Shan-Kar's troupe there is a gentleman who places ten Indian drums, which are called tablas, in a semicircle at the centre of which he squats down and then proceeds to play on them using the wrist, the ball of the hand, the flat hand, the fingers and finger tips with incredible speed, producing rhythms so complex that swing music seems positively simple in comparison. If you remember Jack Powell who used to apear in vaudeville playing on chairs, tables, tin pans and everything *including* the kitchen stove, you will have a faint approximation of the speed and intricacy of this Indian drum playing. What struck me as I heard it was that a great tap dancer is doing substantially the same sort of thing. Footwork and the sounds produced by footwork have become inordinately important and only a few dancers like Astaire, Bolger and Paul Draper add something by the movements of their entire bodies. A lot of dancers dance with their faces, but that unfortunately does not help. No American dancer I know can use his arms, his head, his hands as Oriental dancers do and Shan-Kar has in addition a rapid movement of his neck which is something like the darting of a snake and something like throwing your thumb out of joint and is altogether the despair of Western imitators.

I suppose that if you put your mind to it you could develop a whole philosophy about the difference between the East and the West based on the fact that our dancers are separatists about their legs, whereas the men of the East combine all their movements into a perfect unity, but I have discovered that being philosophical about dances is the quickest way of missing the satisfaction of watching dancers. There is no mysticism about shuffling off to Buffalo and I hope there never will be.

Gilbert Seldes, *Esquire*

Wireless and Danger of Uniformity

THAT NEW FACTOR in our civilisation, the wireless, has one main ill attaching to it and one main good. The main ill is the increase of mechanical uniformity; the main good is the novel enlargement of that on which the human mind feeds, instruction and entertainment. All the major consequences of the innovation attach to these two roots.

A succession of new instruments, going back to the appearance of the printing press nearly 500 years ago, have made more and more for a mechanical uniformity in such social life as was subject to their influence. Now complete uniformity, excellent as a means for organising men to a particular end is in itself destructive of life; and when it is mechanical, actually hostile to life. Life is organic diversity in unity. When unity is mechanical in quality and universal in application it kills the diversity and thereby kills life.

This danger from uniformity is not greatly enhanced by State monopoly, for such is the nature of our modern large-scale instruments that they tend to exclude competition in any case, and fall under the power of great units of capital. If you have not State monopoly in wireless then you have wireless at the service of wealth. Uniformity then must be accepted as a necessary evil attaching to use of wireless in any form.

The least of the evils attaching to uniformity is the decay of zest through the absence of contrast. What the worst of its evils may be it would be difficult to discover. Among the worst is the absence of reaction to stimulus, of which an example in point is the popular remark: "The worst of the wireless is you cannot answer back." Widespread simultaneous diffusion, among millions, of the same fact or the same opinion excludes not only opposing fact and opposing opinion, but the modifying fact and the modifying opinion. Uniformity is the enemy of life and therefore also necessarily the enemy of growth, whether the growth of evil or the growth of good. Any method of thought—a philosophy, a religion—grows, like everything else, from a seed; and the seed is commonly the mind of one man convincing, at first, a few. Each of those few convinces another few and the general effect enlarges in geometrical progression. All mechanical, simultaneous, and universal methods are in direct contradiction with this fundamental process, lacking which society grows sterile.

There is a loss of vitality when the book replaces the living word, another greater loss when the urban newspaper replaces the book, and another, still greater, when universally diffused wireless replaces the Press.

So much for the main evil and danger. The advantages are more obvious. They are, as was just said, the very wide diffusion of human mental food: knowledge and recreation. As in a great many modern things, there is a risk of underestimating the good about them, through following the judgment of too small a number: through following the judgment of the comparatively well-to-do and the comparatively leisured. Men and women without experience of the grievous limitations under which the mass of their fellow-beings suffer can with difficulty appreciate a new widespread popular benefit. Reason may tell them that the benefit is there, but only experience can render that conclusion vivid. Now wireless has this very great civic good attached to it that, it brings recreation, and instruction on facts, to vast numbers: one may say to, potentially, every household in the State. It is so cheap that it is at almost everybody's disposal. The drawback here is that the instruction cannot be the most useful kind of instruction, for much the most useful kind of instruction is instruction in ultimate truth: sound philosophy. Instruction by wireless will hardly be more than an instruction on facts, and a mass of disconnected fact is of little value to the mind.

Hilaire Belloc, *Radio Times*

Conquest of Cancer

THE LATEST EDITION of *March of Time* contains an episode entitled the *Conquest of Cancer*. The greater part of the film has been made in the United States. Several of the leading authorities on cancer appear without their names being mentioned and make a series of statements emphasising the fact that cancer is curable and that many thousands of persons have been cured of cancer because they have sought medical advice sufficiently early. They warn the public against the use of quack cures on which, in the United States, a large amount of money is being wasted. The scene then shifts to England where Sir Kingsley Wood appears and teaches the same lesson. The film has evidently been editorially supervised by a responsible medical authority in America and it proves that the admittedly difficult task of educating public opinion with regard to cancer can be accomplished effectively and at the same time with tact and restraint. The English portion is not as strictly anonymous as the American, though no exception can be taken to the discreet reference to distinguished workers made by Sir Kingsley Wood. Danger lies in this use of the cinema to advertise individual institutions. It must not be allowed to weaken the self denying code of anonymity that the medical profession has for very good reasons imposed upon itself.

Editorial, *The Lancet*

WORLD OPINION

Hollywood and the Bread-line

THERE HAS BEEN considerable talk, much of it loose in character, about labour troubles and the probability of a strike within the industry. Such predictions not only are unwise but are almost impossible to make, since there are many elements that complicate the labour situation here and make a penetrating analysis difficult. It is a fight in which neither faction could hope to enlist much sympathy.

On one side, the studios are making too much money, are governed in many instances by incompetent heads and are regarded by the outside world as too extravagant and too wasteful to attract a militant defence; on the other, while there are many divisions of the industry woefully underpaid, particularly in the light of salaries in other branches, it is doubtful that any strenuous movement could be stimulated in the nation's union ranks in behalf of people making upward of $200 a week. The wage scales of most of the crafts preclude picket lines with banners reading, "We want bread for our babies."

The Screen Actors Guild appears to be in a peculiar situation in relation to the general set-up. While their contributions to the war chest would be valuable, they would alienate public sympathy. In the NRA days, when Washington was jammed with participants in various industry struggles, a perspiring conciliator emerged from a conference room with a telegram in his hand. He exclaimed to a group of newspaper men as he waved the voluminous wire in the air, "Here we are in that room trying to get enough for thousands of coal miners to eat on, and a lot of Hollywood actors who are making better than $1,000 a week send me this to tell me they are unhappy."

Douglas W. Churchill, *N.Y. Sunday Times*

Civilisation is Exciting

IN A SENSE, I suppose, you might argue that all films are propaganda for something or other. If they make you feel satisfied with the world as it is you can call them propaganda for the existing social order. Most films are like that. In a more specific sense, films can be propaganda in that they make you feel that certain things, certain ideals, certain modes of living are specially worthwhile.

A *Pasteur* makes you feel the nobility of scientific service; a *Fury* makes you feel the necessity of law; and *All Quiet* makes you feel the futility of fighting; a *Charge of the Light Brigade* makes you feel the "glory" of being killed.

Naturally no two of us react in quite the same way to the propagandist stimuli of any film. It happens to be my private conviction that writing books and even sorting letters are more civilised forms of human activity than, say, forming fours and polishing buttons and learning how to squeeze a trigger. Likewise, it is my private habit to measure the strength of a man's patriotism not by what he does in the hysteria of war, but by what he does day by day to make his country a worthier and more civilised place in time of peace.

I applaud films like *Night Mail* and *Cover to Cover* because they make you feel what an exciting thing our civilisation is to be living in; they find their urgency in the facts of the social process, their drama in the ordinary world of ordinary men and women.

And that, in my view, is the main social function of the cinema, the main justification of the energy and capital that the film industry attracts to itself—to help our personal citizenship to keep up with the march of the world of which we are citizens.

The idea that art can deal with the individual human soul in isolation is dead. Our modern poets, for example, will have none of it. Deeper sympathy for our fellowmen must spring from greater understanding of the community, its organisation, its stresses, its psychology. The highest goals of our choicest spirits to-day are social goals, not personal goals.

That is why I applaud *The March of Time*—when the Censor doesn't distort it—why I applaud a *Pasteur*, a *Fury*, a *White Angel*, why I become excited at the news of a *Stars Look Down* and a *South Riding*.

Frank Evans, *Newcastle Evening Chronicle*

Mechanical Aids to Learning

THE FILMS AND WIRELESS have already begun to play an important part in education and there is every prospect of their becoming even more important. It must be remembered that they do not so much introduce us to a new kind of education as provide additional opportunities for making existing forms of teaching more concrete and interesting and for linking up the work of the school with what is going on in the outside world. Certainly, the teacher who is able to employ films or wireless as an aid to instruction may find in one or the other of them an instrument for infusing fresh life and purpose into his syllabuses. But the attention of children usually needs guiding and directing, as otherwise what has been introduced as an aid may become a danger. Many teachers have worked out a proper technique for getting the best out of mechanical aids. This technique will emphasise, as a rule, the importance of adequate preparation and skilful following-up. It may be added that schools which do not possess either a film projector or a wireless set may still in many districts do a great deal for their pupils through the sympathetic discussion of what the children see at the local cinemas or hear by wireless at home.

The teacher will also consider how far the cinematograph film and the wireless broadcast can serve the aims of the teaching of History. Through these media, representations of the past, of the daily life of the people, of their work and their recreations, of the great changes in industry and commerce can do much to help children to make pictures in their minds of what the past was really like. And, if the teaching of History is to touch events of the present day, teachers may find it useful to have at their disposal, as opportunity offers and as need arises, material presented by one, who is outside the school and who perhaps possesses greater knowledge of national and world affairs or greater power of impartial presentation.

Both the lantern and the epidiascope have begun to play an increasingly important part in the teaching of geography. Of the two, the latter is more generally useful for school purposes. An instrument capable of throwing images both from solid objects and diagrams as well as from lantern slides is of the greatest value. Teachers can make transparencies of their own diagrams and other illustrations, without undue difficulty. Where the school possesses a cinematograph apparatus the film, used under suitable conditions, will do much to give life and reality to the instruction. There is now a good stock of films which can be used in the teaching of geography.

An increasing number of schools are now equipped with wireless sets and with a skilful teacher the wireless lessons may become a valuable part of the school's geography teaching. It is possible to hear at first-hand vivid decriptions of the countries of which the children are reading. With adequate preparation and following up, these lessons may give a life and colour to the work which is sometimes lacking.

Although direct contact with nature is the basis of all true nature study, the children's experiences need not be limited to what can be observed and discovered at first-hand. The Junior School should have its Natural History Library, consisting, for example, of reference books which the children can learn to consult, of reading books about plants and animals and of animal stories. It should also have its collection of pictorial illustrations.

Use should be made, where possible, of the optical lantern and the micro-projector.

The use of films in teaching has been greatly hindered by the high cost of the apparatus required and by the unsuitable character of of most of the films available, though these are now being rapidly improved. Their use makes it possible to widen the scope of Science teaching and may also be justified as a means of rapid recapitulation. It should not, however, be forgotten that Science teaching should never depend on pictures when real things are available.

Board of Education Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers.

Why?

1. WHY IS IT THAT WHEN you enter a theatre and, before the curtain goes up, observe in the orchestra pit a lady harpist, the ensuing musical exhibit generally turns out to be a bore?

2. Why is it that when, in the first act of a play treating of humdrum married life, the wife complains to her husband about a leak in the roof, the rest of the play invariably proves to be a waffle?

3. Why is it that the deeply emotional scenes of an English actor are always better if he happens to be suffering from a bad cold?

4. Why is it that logically reticent and lifelike direction of a historical play in which the characters wear swords and uniforms always deadens the play and makes it tedious, while a liberal dose of the old ham direction makes it relatively palatable?

5. Why is it that the actors and actresses in secondary rôles in Shakespearean plays seem always to believe that the plays were written by Gounod and accordingly read even such lines as "Bring me my boots; I will unto the king," "Come home with me to supper," or "Ah, my sour husband," as if they were composed for a church organ? George Jean Nathan, *Esquire*

TEN YEARS OF DOCUMENTARY

by Basil Wright

The resignation of John Grierson from the G.P.O. Unit marks the end of the first chapter in the story of a new and powerful movement. The present issue of W.F.N. seems a fitting opportunity to sum up the present achievements of the realist film in the service of the community, and to look ahead to its future developments.

FROM one aspect the emphasis might all be on the side of Grierson's individual building-up of the realist film movement. It does, in point of fact, owe an incalculable debt to his forceful personality, his far-sighted production policies, his complete integrity, and not least to his genius for film-making and the training of film makers. But, he himself, we are sure, would prefer at this stage to stress the wider aspects, and to pay some tribute to the foresight of the British civil servants who have sponsored the experiment of bringing alive the problems and realities of the life of these islands and the Empire. The work of Sir Stephen Tallents, first at the E.M.B. and later at the G.P.O., gave a lead which has since been followed by many of the major industrial concerns of this country. It was within these governmental terms and with the assistance of Sir Stephen Tallents that Grierson—battling sometimes against incomprehensions and suspicions—worked out the basic structure of the documentary movement.

With the acceptance in 1929 of *Drifters* as an unqualified success, the E.M.B. offered the opportunity of a permanent small-scale film unit. Between January 1930 and July 1933 this Unit increased its production personnel from two to over thirty, produced over 100 films (some of which went to the theatres, but most to the formation of the Empire Film Library) and established a group of directors and cameramen united by a common enthusiasm and a common aim.

Nation-wide Recognition

The E.M.B. films received nation-wide recognition, and by 1932 the possibilities of this type of production began to be closely considered both by other Government departments and by commercial organisations. Under Grierson's guidance, and with directors lent by the E.M.B., films were produced by the Ministry of Agriculture, the Air Ministry and the Travel Association. Of outside firms, His Master's Voice, the Orient Line, and the Ceylon Tea Propaganda Board entered the field; and the Shell Marketing Co. set up its own film department with an E.M.B. man at its head.

At the same time, educationists and social workers all over the country were increasing their demands for this new type of film. The resources of the Empire Film Library were badly strained by the constant flow of requests for the loan of films. And finally,the audiences in the cinemas were applauding with an unexpected enthusiasm the group of E.M.B. shorts of which Flaherty's *Industrial Britain* was the patronymic.

In 1933 when the E.M.B. was abolished, the documentary movement was too well established to disappear with it. Still under the aegis of Tallents, the Unit passed to the Public Relations department of the G.P.O.

And here Grierson, working within apparently narrower terms of reference (no longer "bringing the Empire alive" but presenting the story of the Post Office activities) actually widened the whole field. Taking the word "Communications" in its widest sense, he showed how from the presentation of process or manufacture one could reach out to the more important implications of organisation, and finally to the genuine idea of modern internationalism represented by such bald names as Faraday House, Rugby, the Meteorological office, or a Post Office sorting bench.

Simultaneously, the development of similar production policies outside the Government continued to increase—but it was to Grierson and his work at the G.P.O. that outside sponsors came for advice on production policy and personnel. From being lent out for specific jobs G.P.O. directors now went out for keeps. Gas, Oil, Shipping, Air Lines were all on the move. Realist organisations sprang up—Strand films being the pioneer. The Association of Realist Film Producers formed a central focus for advice, and presented a common front of documentary directors. G.B. Instructional, which antedates the realist movement, also entered the field with enthusiasm and success under Bruce Woolfe.

All the time, less spectacularly but with determined progress, the non-theatrical field —always to the forefront of Grierson's policy—had been developing.

The New Audience

Post Office road shows, and the film supply of the Empire and G.P.O. film libraries, were tapping a public of amazing size and enthusiasm. G.P.O. non-theatrical audiences rose to over five million a year. The distribution side of the G.P.O. film unit now almost overtopped the production organisation in size and personnel. Outside sponsors began to think in terms of non-theatrical distribution and increased their production programmes accordingly.

To-day Grierson steps out as Film Consultant into the wider fields created by his own efforts. He can survey a movement whose power and ramifications are more than national. The young men and women he has trained, and continues to train, are established in many and varied fields of production activity; at Strand, producing films for the National Book Council, for Imperial Airways, for the National Council for Social Service, for the Zoological Society; at Realist Film Unit, working for the Gas Light & Coke Company and for the League of Nations; through A.R.F.P. organising production programmes for the Oil and Gas industries, for the Travel Association and similar bodies. The prospect may seem unlimited. What is the future going to be?

Tradition of Experiment

Firstly, the importance of the Government Film Units cannot be too strongly stressed. It is only through such units as the G.P.O. that long term vision—the maturing of films over a period and the training of new directors—can be properly held. Outside, financial dictates and urgencies compel a less leisurely approach, and are quite excellently establishing a new and vital technique suited to the circumstances. But the tradition of experiment rests with the Government. Under no other conditions can new possibilities in sound and colour be given a chance to develop, and the compelling vitality revealed in such films as *Night Mail* or *We Live in Two Worlds* be nursed—maybe over 12 months—into existence.

No survey of the realist movement can do other than stress this importance, and stress also the creative approach which the G.P.O. film unit represents. Its presentation of the Post Office theme in terms of internationalism, in terms of common humanity, has been,

and is, one of those phenomena possible only in a democratic state, and one for which not merely the film-makers themselves but citizens at large should be genuinely grateful.

It is from this enlightened approach to the field of propaganda and public relations that the production programmes of the commercial and industrial sponsors are taking their lead. And though many may think that the Gas films, dealing sincerely and objectively with urgent national programmes such as slums, schools or nutrition, should in all nature be produced by Government departments, it must be remembered that the first realisation of the importance of this type of approach came from the Government itself.

Secondly, what are to be the new developments? The new Film Centre now founded by Grierson and Elton may be regarded as the focal point for the future. The possibilities of the realist film have widened beyond measure during the last few years. We may envisage therefore, firstly, the continuation of the pioneer work of the G.P.O. film unit, and look to it to continue its policy of creative experiment and the maturing of ideas and individuals; we may hope too to see a widening of film activities on the Governmental front and the production of films of vital social value by the different Ministries. Secondly, we can look to the sponsored films for even greater developments in the field, not merely of public relations, but of education. Thirdly, a consolidation of the tie-up between the realists and the *March of Time*—already closely bound together both in personnel and common interests. And fourthly, a step forward into the field of feature films, a new type of feature, in which the realist tradition will combine with the best production values of the theatrical movie to produce, on an economic basis, a further development of the use of cinema as a living force not merely in national interests, but also in that wider international field which has no frontiers between race and race.

A part in National life

Judged by commercial standards, the realist movement is small. By any other (and perhaps more important) standards it is already playing a forceful part in our national life. It will be Grierson's job to see that the men he has trained and the machinery he has set up continue to operate with the same standards of integrity which he has by long-term and personal effort so firmly established.

The motives of the realists are often under suspicion. Blimps and fools accuse them of Bolshevism, and some sections of the Film Trade claim that through their sponsored films and free shows they are muscling in unfairly on a legitimate field of commercial enterprise. But so far, the opposition has accomplished little, and one may suspect that it will be finally conquered by the realisation that in serving the realist interests the realist directors are serving the whole cause of cinema, be it in terms of Hollywood and Pinewood or, more humbly but perhaps more importantly, the schoolroom or the public lecture hall.

With the realist film movement a new and valuable element has almost imperceptibly entered the somewhat hectic world of cinema—a sense that national interests, in all branches of social and community life, can be not merely served, but actually made more vital, more individually important to the ordinary man. In a world where democracy is fighting an uphill battle, this cannot be regarded as unimportant, and it will not be only his close colleagues who wish Grierson more strength to his arm in his new ventures.

(*cont. bottom next column*)

"Being a Friend of a Friend who Knows..."

"That is the cause of it all," says E. G. CROOKALL analysing the British "flops"

FIRE Over England is typical of the ambitious, expensive English film that fails to ring the bell. There are moments of artistic worth—the cross-cutting of the sound in the interview with the Spanish ambassador, but they are lost in the general failure. The characters do not live. They are romantic, story-book characters who walk about with no appreciation of their situation or rank. An attempted regicide turns out to be a demented hag with an empty pistol watched with eager attention by the Spanish plotters! A suddenly introduced sequence which fizzles out like the murmurings of a self-conscious schoolboy caught in the act. And you might well ask, in the act of what? The pro-Spanish faction may be stylised and theatrical when denounced by Elizabeth and even persuaded by a heart to heart talk on a subject which they must have threshed out among themselves. Surely a group of experienced men well paid, presumably, by Spain would not be converted in about 30 seconds by a regal chat! No, dramatic licence is stretched too far. This is Victorian provincial drama, and the experience of the 20th hard-bitten century of plotters is that they don't behave like naughty schoolboys.

The Elizabethans lived in a small way, their houses were good but not palatial, their ships were small but efficient. The background of the Queen in this film is something akin to that of a Roman queen if such a thing had been. Interiors soar amidst a Mediterranean clarity. It is indeed a golden age. But is this true? The Elizabethan room in spite of its advance in the use of windows was essentially dull, if not dark. The characteristic of a Spanish setting is contrasted brilliant light and shade. The settings for historical drama should not glisten. A goodly size for a ship of that day was 70 tons. Drake himself sailed the Atlantic in a 60 tonner. The boats on view here were the same size as the Spanish.

Life of the people

But enough of mere pulling to pieces. What is, essentially the matter with most English flops? It rests partly in the characters who seem always removed from the life of the people. Any audience however ignorant feels there is something wrong when a historical film gleams as *Rembrandt* does. Not that it appreciates any the more a film that flings stark realism at it in the manner of *Sabotage*. If Flora Robson had been allowed to give Elizabeth life as she was obviously capable of doing the film might have been carried to a triumphant success by public opinion. For the English have sufficient sense of the dramatic to appreciate good acting and are always willing to welcome a new face if it has anything interesting to say.

"If Flora Robson had been allowed to give Elizabeth life. . . ."

The English film has a wealth of star players which it uses, and justifiably, from the stage. But together with this rich talent it also catches in its net a fish which is becoming increasingly a liability of the native film. Small-part players. Until something is done to relieve those people who do their work for the fun of it, of any possibility of getting before a camera, the English film is doomed. Nothing smashes more completely a good scene than the grinning aping of a crowd of inefficient extras. There is no lack of talent for small-parts, it is lack of opportunity and too much of someone being a friend of a friend who "knows . . . ." that is the cause of it all.

Production detail seems too elementary to be considered as a failing of any film organisation however young. Yet we are entertained to "a painted ship upon a painted ocean" in *The Ghost goes West*. Why, in a film where money was obviously not stinted, couldn't a camera crew have gone to Southampton and obtained a picture of a real liner instead of the painfully "model" affair that floated for a brief time before our eyes? The English industry copies Hollywood but forgets what Hollywood doesn't—detail matters, small-parts matter, a star's characteristics matter. London Films thinks in spectacles and history, but casts in Mayfair and forgets Liverpool.

AND MALT DOES MORE THAN SHAKESPEARE CAN— (*With Apologies to Housman*)

"In Stratford-on-Avon people do not rely on Will Shakespeare for entertainment," *says*
RICHARD CARR

"The 'Birthplace' all nicely done up"

SIR JOHN SQUIRE once wrote a story describing the catastrophic effect upon Stratford-on-Avon of a discovery proving that the author of the plays was not Shakespeare but Bacon. The truth of the imaginary picture drawn of the results for Stratford is vividly borne out by a visit to the town. If anyone else did write those plays and it is found out, Stratford would jump bang into first place among distressed areas.

The whole town seems to live by catering for the pilgrims who pour into Stratford from early April to late September. There are hotels, boarding-houses, tea-shops, restaurants, and pubs galore. There are shops filled with mementoes of all shapes, sizes and colours; medallions, flower-pots, ash-trays and pipe-racks. There seem to be more reproductions of Shakespeare portraits here than there are words to his plays; and more alleged relics of his life and times than there are bad shillings in slot machines. And, judging by the number of mulberry trees and pieces of mulberry tree on view, Shakespeare must have planted more mulberry trees than Mr. Hore Belisha has Beacons.

Not everyone depends upon the tourist trade for their work—not everyone, but nearly everyone ; such trades, for example, as building and transport must get much of their work as a consequence of the tourist trade. There is, however, still some honest farming in the neighbourhood, which, together with its allied trades and crafts, helps to keep Stratford a pleasant country town in spite of its highly commercialised attractions. But to visit the town in search of information about the film tastes of its inhabitants feels at first like searching for the allegorical snowflake in hell. After an hour's walk around the shops, museums and other showplaces (including the "Birthplace," all nicely done up and looking from the outside like a house on a London housing estate), the most ardent supporter of cinemas begins to feel intimidated.

Closer inspection reveals that things are not so black for the cinema in Stratford as they at first seem. The people of Stratford may depend for their livelihood upon the "pudding faced" effigy in the church, upon the season of plays at the dignified Memorial Theatre, upon the reverent inspections of the excavated foundations of Shakespeare's house, but they certainly do not depend upon Will Shakespeare's plays for their leisure-time entertainment.

The Memorial Theatre

Perhaps this would not be admitted openly: the fetish is too strong. Mentioning Shakespeare to ordinary people in Stratford is like mentioning the Holy Ghost in a railway carriage full of commercial travellers. But a visit to the Memorial Theatre and to the cinema reveals the truth: there is a very considerable difference in the composition of the audience, not by any means to the detriment of the cinemagoers. If the Memorial Theatre depended upon the patronage of local people it would not last a month: the cinema, on the other hand, whilst benefiting to some extent from the summer-time visitors, depends all the year round on local support. (It must be recorded too, in fairness to all classes, that a royal visitor of recent years showed a similar preference. A Near-Eastern potentate arrived in full regalia to visit the town of Shakespeare's birth and death, but instead of going to the Theatre went to the pictures!)

Lest this statement about the preference of Stratford people should seem an accusation, let me hasten to say that the reasons for their preference are not peculiar to them. Stratford cinemagoers may be less sophisticated than Londoners, but in this they are no different from the cinemagoers of most semi-rural and provincial towns. It is the pressure and needs of modern life which make them cinemagoers and make the cinema a vital element in spare-time enjoyment that the Memorial Theatre can never hope to be. It should be added that the contest is not so much between Shakespeare and the cinema as between the cinema and the Memorial Theatre.

For, as presented at the Memorial Theatre, set in the artificial Shakespeare-worship Stratford atmosphere, the plays must smack of education and ritual: they become show-pieces, far removed from life and reality, deprived of the guts which could make them sufficiently alive and real to attract ordinary people. To compare an average American crime film, with its fast, slick dialogue, its live people, and its sustained interest and action with the mincing and posturings of the present-day British theatre is not only to realise why ordinary people prefer—where choice is possible, of course—the cinema, but also to get a considerable insight into the reasons why British films are so poor and lifeless compared to their American rivals. This stage tradition, a comparatively recent one, by the way, has been imposed on the British film.

Stratford's only cinema, the Picture House, is surprisingly large and comfortably seated. It has a fair-sized stage which was used for the Shakespeare Season while the present Theatre was being built. I am regretfully compelled to record that at the back of the cinema is a mulberry tree.

The Manager of Stratford's Picture House is an unusually interesting personality. Most cinema managers have come over from managing music halls or theatres with the change in public taste. Not so Mr. Waller Jeffs. He has grown up with the industry and has been exhibiting films for almost as long as the industry has lived.

Early History

He took up the business of showing films—in shops, in halls, in theatres and at fairs—when the highbrows scorned the cinema and the learned declared it to be a passing craze, a nine-days' wonder. Mr. Jeffs recalls the first public exhibition of cinematography by Trewey, assisted by veteran Matt. Raymond, at the Polytechnic, Regent Street, in 1896; the simultaneous exhibition of his Animatograph by Robert Paul at the Northampton Institute and the subsequent rapid spread of the industry so that, by the end of 1899, some score of projectors were in operation in all parts of the country.

Film Studios—Hours and Working Conditions

by
The Film Council

This is an introductory article to an examination of the hours and working conditions of British film technicians, to appear in our next issue.

To ensure a satisfactory general level of production quality it is not only necessary that the material resources available should be allocated in a rational and economic manner, it is even more important that the creative energies of those who make the films are given a real chance to exert themselves. Next to the wage problem the factors most important from this point of view are hours of labour and the physical conditions under which it is performed. For it must be obvious to all that in a productive process in which so much depends on the judgment—artistic and technical—of the men on the job, quality is conditional upon the absence of strain and fatigue. The problem of British production quality is therefore to an even greater extent a problem of British studio conditions, than it is one of British film finance. In order to ascertain what are these conditions, the Film Council has decided to make a questionnaire enquiry among technicians, who are asked to give concrete descriptions of their working conditions in the various studios during the last 12 months. The first results of this enquiry, which will also cover film laboratories, will be presented to our readers in the next issue of *W.F.N.*

The following summary of the collective agreement which governs the conditions of labour in all film production enterprises in France will serve as an appropriate preface for next month's report. One of the many gains of organised labour since the advent of the Popular Front Government, the agreement between the C.G.T. (the technicians' union) and the C.G.P.F. (the employers' association), was not accomplished without difficulties. Even at the last moment technical reasons enabled the employers to delay its actual signature, originally arranged for June 7th, 1936, until almost the end of the year. During the intervening period a far less advantageous agreement was signed between the employers' organisations and a "professional syndicate" launched for this purpose in August, but the established union was able to defeat this manœuvre and the original contract is now in force.

After defining the parties, territory, and duration of the agreement, the French technicians' charter asserts the right of all salaried employees in film production enterprises to trade union organisation (art. 3). Articles 4 to 10 define in detail the machinery of representation safeguarding the interests of the staff in their relations with the employers in each establishment.

Number of Technicians

Of great importance to our problem of working conditions is article 11, which fixes the minimum number of technicians to be employed on a feature film and defines the precise occupations of each. Only three forms of contract are allowed by the agreement: engagement for a film (in which case the period of production must be fixed in advance); engagement for six months; and for a year (art. 12). Indemnities and other conditions arising from a breach of contract or from cessation of production for other reasons are specified in detail in the following article. Regularly employed technicians have the right to one month's paid holiday per year (art. 14).

Hours of labour may not exceed the legal maximum for French industry: *i.e.* 40 hours a week. Work on Sundays and feast days is prohibited (except under clearly defined conditions). Daily working hours must be fixed by an agreed, normal and regular schedule, taking into account the technical requirements of production. They must be distributed between 8.30 a.m. and 6 p.m., and there must be a break of 1½ hours between 12 and 2 p.m. Overtime is permissible in cases of urgency only by agreement with the staff delegates and must on no account exceed one hour. Moreover, for each hour of overtime worked in this way, 1¼ hour must be deducted from the working week. If the story requires shooting on Sundays or holidays, the following day must be a rest day for the technicians. The remaining sections of this key article (15) define certain exceptions in the regulation of overtime work for assistant directors, decorators, make-up men, location directors, dressers and cutters, and the manner in which these workers are to be recompensed.

Night Work

Article 16 allows night work only for out-door night scenes. Each night shift must be followed and preceded by 12 hours' rest and cannot extend beyond the maximum duration fixed for day work. There must be a ½ hour break after four hours of shooting. The employers must provide at their own cost a meal and facilities for the return of each staff member to his home. The time spent on night work during a week must be recompensed by a reduction of double the amount of time from that week.

On work outside the studio, provision must be made for a proper mid-day meal at the expense of the employers, the cost of which must not be less than 20 francs (art. 17), while the conditions and allowances for travelling by rail, boat or air are specified at considerable length in the following article (they provide, among other points, first class travel by day and sleeping-car accommodation by night).

On signing the contract the employer must deposit the total amount of the salaries stipulated in it with a bank of guarantee accepted by the union (art. 19).

Articles 20 to 25 provide respectively for the replacement of technicians absent on account of illness; ordinary and special insurances against accidents, etc.; methods of engagement; regular cleaning, disinfecting, paint-spraying, etc., *outside* shooting hours, the prohibition of cellulose paint, and other safety measures; the deposition of two copies of each contract with the trade union, in addition to the copies held by the employer and the employee; and the grades of technicians whose names must appear on the titles and programmes of the films produced.

The agreement terminates with a schedule of minimum salaries for each grade of technicians, providing for automatic adjustments to changes in the cost of living.

Such are the terms of the contract that determines the conditions of work in every type of film production enterprise in France at the present time. In the absence of any general agreement for the British industry as a whole, we must await the results of our questionnaire enquiry before we can outline the conditions under which English technicians carry out their tasks.

Stratford-on-Avon *(contd.)*

"We were often our own producers in those days," recalls Mr. Jeffs, "and made up our programmes with topical and interest subjects and with what specal 'features' could be obtained. One of the most successful of the early 'feature' films was the *Voyage Across the Atlantic*, produced by Sydney Carter, who wrote the scenario, edited the film and arranged the incidental music and effects. This film ran for thirteen weeks, daily performances, at the Curzon Hall, Birmingham, and the 'storm scenes' are remembered by people in that city to this very day."

Mr. Waller Jeffs also remembers early attempts to synchronise sound with pictures: "I myself tried," he says, "at the old Curzon Hall, but it was not a great success."

Mr. Jeffs rightly feels that the part played by the travelling showman-exhibitor in the building of the cinema industry and in helping to make possible its leap to first place in the leisure-time lives of the modern generation, is not given the recognition it deserves in the existing histories of the cinema.

In spite of their exalted surroundings the tastes of Stratford's cinemagoers are very much the same as those of other semi-rural towns. They steadily refuse to like the so-called intelligent or the obviously educational picture. They like good action pictures, good drama and above all good musicals. Among their favourites are George Arliss, Gracie Fields and the Lynn-Walls team.

One leaves Stratford feeling that an industry which can evoke continued response, which can give such vital entertainment and such real pleasure to ordinary people is somehow coming closer to the art of Shakespeare and to the real living content of drama than ritualistic presentations of Shakespeare or the present-day theatre can ever hope to be.

THE STRAND FILM COMPANY

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Romance and Adventure In Real Things

The Imperial Institute and its Film Library

by

Sir Harry Lindsay, K.C.I.E., C.B.E.
Director of the Imperial Institute

(*Fourth article in the series on Film Libraries*)

Botha's Hall, Congo Caves (*Courtesy S. African Rlwys. and Harbours.*)

We were all young once, but our trouble is that we so easily forget. We forget the romances and the adventures which once used to sweep us off our feet and made us thrill to the glad madness of life, if only for a moment or two. The golden moment came and passed, and we could never control its coming or its going, but from the mere fact that it had occurred sprang the conviction that it would recur; and when such moments did recur they proved as nothing else could that life was seriously worth living.

I have used that word "seriously" on purpose, for in some mysterious way all true gaiety, whether its source be the charm of romance, or the spice of adventure, the truth of beauty, or the very soul of wisdom, is so to speak the serious part of life—worth while, worth treasuring.

You may ask what this has got to do with the Imperial Institute. Well, it all hangs together. All the best stories are the worth-while stories and their success depends on just two cardinal factors—they must tell about real things, for only realities can truly "reach" us, whether we are children or adults—and they must be told with something of the art which at once disarms and charms.

Cast your mind back to your childhood days—what were the lessons which you assimilated easily, quickly, durably? They were the lessons which, for one reason or another, you found absorbing. In other words there is one and only one golden key to successful education and that is interest. Inspire a child with an interest in his or her subject and you are already halfway through the lesson of the day.

Now that is our job at the Imperial Institute. We are out, not to teach lessons, but to tell stories; not to supplant but to supplement and aid the task of the school-teacher. We are out to inspire some of the questions which rise instinctively to the surface of childish minds—to inspire and at the same time to answer them. "What's this?" "What does it look like?" "How does it grow?" "What's it made of?" "Where does it come from?" "What can it be made into?" "What tools would you use?" "What other things can be joined to it?" "What's the good of it, anyway?" They're all childish questions, very natural and instinctive and healthy, and they lie at the base of all useful knowledge and all human progress.

As I say, we both provoke and answer such questions by means of the "stories" we tell in our Exhibition Galleries at the Imperial Institute. There are four great Galleries running east, west, south, and north; they are divided into Empire Courts and each Court contains photographs, dioramas, specimens and other exhibits which illustrate the life, scenery, and industries of some part of the Empire. The West Gallery, appropriately enough, is given up to Canada and the East Gallery to India, Burma and Ceylon; thence, via Malaya, Borneo, Hong-Kong, and Sarawak in the South Gallery to Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, the Falkland Islands, West Indies, and Newfoundland to Canada once more; while the North Gallery links Canada with the Mediterranean Colonies and Palestine, and so via West, South and East Africa, the Rhodesias, the Sudan and Somaliland back to Ceylon and the East Gallery.

In each of these Courts we tell the story of each country represented—travelogues to show its scenery; native arts and crafts; agriculture, forestry, the pastoral and mining industries; statuettes of the Empire Builders who discovered and cared for it and sometimes died for it. The industries we explain by means of "story" exhibits, that is to say composite exhibits, which start with specimens of the economic product concerned, photographs showing how it is grown or mined, how it is transported to the United Kingdom, what it looks like when it arrives, how it is finally processed here until it becomes an object of common everyday use. By this means we link up the raw material with the finished article, telling the story stage by stage; we link up the primary producer with the manufacturer; and we associate the product with the Empire country of its birth.

You may call this, if you like, visual instruction in the commercial geography of the Empire. It is only when we open our mental eyes and begin to take a real interest in the living world around us that we begin to expand and develop and, in short, to live, for growth is necessary to all life, whether in the domain of body, mind, or soul. If one cannot grow in quantity, one can at least grow in quality, in increasing health of body or of feelings, thought and will.

And now you may ask, "What has all this to do with the Film?" Well, the film plays a part, and a very important part, in this programme. The Institute has inherited from the Empire Marketing Board, by courtesy of the Postmaster-General, the magnificent collection of Empire films known as the E.F.L. These films it projects in its own cinema and also circulates to schools and to social, industrial and educational institutions throughout the United Kingdom. It also performs the same function, in the capacity of agent for the Postmaster-General, for the films produced by the G.P.O. These films describe, in vivid and arresting stories, the activities of the Postal, Telegraph, and Telephone Departments of His Majesty's Government; and by this means the same lesson is put across—the stimulation of childish curiosity and the satisfaction of that curiosity with the technique of a Government Service of vital social and domestic importance.

These are the means by which we tell the story of Empire Development, by means of the travelogues, and industrial exhibits in our Galleries and the Empire and G.P.O. films in our Cinema and Film Libraries. By these means the romance and adventure of the Empire are brought home to the 700,000 of the general public who visit our Galleries and Cinema every year, to say nothing of the school audiences which see the Empire and G.P.O. films to the number of nearly 5,000,000. It is on these activities that we base the claim of the Imperial Institute to be known and recognised as *the* Storyland of Empire.

PEOPLE OF THE STUDIOS

Denham

At a time when other companies are talking of economy, Korda is planning to outlay £600,000—his share in the deal if he and Sam Goldwyn exercise the option granted by Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks and Charlie Chaplin, to buy up United Artists. As joint controller of the company, Korda hopes to find the foreign markets, the lack of which lay behind the recent financial crisis.

Meanwhile Herr Gunther Stapenhorst, co-producer of UFA's *Emil and the Detectives* and G.B.'s *The Great Barrier*, has joined London Films as co-producer with Korda. His first production will be *Red Shoes*, Merle Oberon's forthcoming picture of the Imperial Russian Ballet, under Ludwig Berger's direction. Miss Oberon is already versed in the art of ballet, having been instructed by Agnes DeMille, choreographer from the Ballet Rambert, for her part in *I, Claudius*.

Robert Donat last month had to give up his part in *South Riding* through illness and Ralph Richardson has taken it over. Edna Best, after a long absence from the screen, is back again as the leading lady. Ian Dalrymple, co-director of *Storm in a Tea Cup*, wrote the script from Winifred Holtby's novel of Yorkshire life, and Harry Stradling, photographer for *Knight Without Armour*, is cameraman. Victor Saville directs and produces.

On his return from New York, where he is planning the première of *Victoria The Great*, Herbert Wilcox puts *Nippy* into production—modern musical with Anna Neagle as a tea-shop girl. Ralph Reader, star and author of *The Gang Show*, is leading man. Scenario is being prepared by Marjorie Gaffney, script writer of *Evergreen* and *Head Over Heels*.

Marcel Hellman's new company, Excelsior Films, has signed on Jack Hulbert and Rex Harrison to make a musical comedy, *The Playboy*. Hellman is producing, and Thornton Freeland (who has just completed *Jericho* at Pinewood) is directing.

Pinewood

A girl found dead at the foot of Beachy Head, a frantic search for the murderer across southern England—such is the plot of *A Shilling for Candles*, novel by Josephine Tey, which Alfred Hitchcock has in production. A plot after his own heart, Hitchcock has spent many weeks acclimatising himself to this new location. His last three films have taken him to Scotland, Switzerland, and the East End of London—this time he leads a chase through country pubs and police stations, courts and workhouses. Nova Pilbeam, who has been away from the studios for over a year, plays the spirited daughter of the chief constable (Percy Marmont). Leading man is Derick de Marney.

Jack Buchanan's big scoop for his newly-formed company is René Clair, whom he has signed to direct his picture with Adele Astaire. Clair's last production was *The Ghost Goes West*—since then he has published a book, but steered clear of the studios. Following immediately on *Smash and Grab*, the company's initial production, will be *The Sky's the Limit*, musical to be directed by Buchanan and Lee Garmes. Concurrently, *Sweet Devil* will take the floor, with Bobbie Howes and Jean Gillie, and directed by Tim Whelan.

Elstree

Richard Bird, star of *Sensation* and *Bulldog Drummond at Bay*, has been chosen by Walter Mycroft to direct *The Terror*, an Edgar Wallace thriller. A shipping clerk before the war, Bird joined the Liverpool Repertory company in 1918. Stage production of *The Dominant Sex* gave him his chance; since then he has starred in several B.I.P. pictures, and produced in the West End, currently, "George and Margaret" and "The Constant Wife."

Over She Goes, successful Saville Theatre musical, is before the cameras with Stanley Lupino and Laddie Cliff—and Max Baer. Graham Cutts is the director.

Teddington

Max Miller, quick-fire comedian, is back with First National for *Transatlantic Trouble*, with comedy director William Beaudine.

Max Miller started in a circus at the age of fourteen and ran away to India a year later, touring the whole country. Since then he has toured the Variety stages, writing his own songs, and winning his way to prominence with his inimitable patter. Started on the screen as the music publisher's agent in *The Good Companions*, since then making big money for Warners' with *Get Off My Foot* and *Educated Evans*.

The cast of *Transatlantic Trouble* also includes Buddy Baer and Joan Miller (the first artist to reach films by way of television).

Welwyn

Mutiny on the Elsinore, Jack London's sea story, is being remade as a talkie by Argyle-British. A camera crew has spent a number of weeks aboard a windjammer getting atmosphere and background shots, and studio work begins with direction by Roy Lockwood, production by John Argyle, and supervision by Captain Walter Summers.

Islington

As a country parson by day and a smuggler by night, George Arliss plays the name part in Dr. Syn, which Roy Neill is directing. After *Dr. Syn*, Arliss is reputed to be planning a Hollywood visit.

This time, Will Hay has Marcel Varnel as his director. The picture is *Oh, Mr. Porter*, the script writers are George Marriott Edgar and Val Guest, and the cameraman is Arthur Crabtree. Shooting has just begun.

America

M. G. M.

Among the productions promised at the annual sales convention last month were: Kipling's *Kim*, with Freddie Bartholomew and Robert Taylor; *Three Comrades*, Erich Maria Remarque's sequel to *All Quiet on the Western Front*, for Robert Taylor, Spencer Tracy and James Stewart; *Idiot's Delight*, Robert Sherwood's Pulitzer Prize play to star Clark Gable and Robert Taylor; *Return of the Thin Man*, with cast, writers and director as before; *The Great Canadian*, for Clark Gable; *Lola Montez*, historical-biography for Joan Crawford; *Merry Christmas*, scripted by Norman Krasna for Luise Rainer; *Rosalie* and *The Girl of the Golden West* for Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy; *Test Pilot* for Gable and Tracy; *Wedding Dress* for Robert Montgomery; and *Hats in the Air* for Eleanor Powell.

Metro also announce four new contracts. Eric Maschwitz (late variety director of the B.B.C.), Sidney Gilliatt and Lieut. Commander Frank Wead (author of *Ceiling Zero* and *China Clipper*) all join up as script writers, and Sir Cedric Hardwicke as a player.

Radio

RKO has secured the productions of Disney for world distribution. The new cartoons are to have three-dimensional effects. Celluloid strips on which the characters are inked will be placed on different planes under the camera—formerly Disney placed his strips directly on top of one another. Some cartoon-lovers are not too happy about this change. They say the chief charm of the cartoon is the two dimensional unreality.

Studio work on Ginger Roger's *Vivacious Lady* having been held up for a month or two owing to James Stewart's illness, George Stevens, the director, has started *A Damsel in Distress*, romantic musical by humorist P. G. Wodehouse. This is Fred Astaire's first solo effort.

Meanwhile, Ginger Rogers teams with Katharine Hepburn in *Stage Door*, picture based on Broadway success by George S. Kaufman and Edna Ferber. Gregory La Cava is directing.

Paramount

War between railways and Pennsylvania farmers in a struggle for control of the oil industry forms the background of *High, Wide, and Handsome*, Jerome Kern–Oscar Hammerstein musical with Irene Dunne in the lead. Rouben Mamoulian directed this picture.

Norman Krasna, author of *Fury*, the widely acclaimed story of American lynching, once more has German director Fritz Lang to interpret his latest screen play *You and Me*, with Sylvia Sidney in the lead. The same team worked together on *You only Live Once*.

After a year's illness, W. C. Fields makes a come-back in *That Man's Here Again*.

Ernst Lubitsch, who has just completed the Dietrich picture, *Angel*, soon starts work on *Bluebeard's Eighth Wife*, with Claudette Colbert.

United Artists

Films which come under Goldwyn's new technicolour plan will be *The Goldwyn Follies*, *The Real Glory* (story of Manilla during the American occupation) and *You Can Be Beautiful*, beauty-parlour story for Gary Cooper and Merle Oberon. Reaction to the announcement that *The Adventures of Marco Polo* was this company's last picture in black and white was hardly comparable to the industry's excitement in 1928 when it was clear that silent days were over. Indeed, the public remains strangely indifferent to the advent of colour.

Latest acquisition for *The Follies* is George Balanchine, former student of Diaghileff and choreographer for Nijinsky, who has been signed to appear in the film with his American ballet. Charles Kullman, Metropolitan Opera Company tenor, who was chosen by Toscanini for the leading rôle in *Die Meistersinger* at last year's Salzburg Festival, is also in the cast.

140,000 feet of background scenes for *Hurricane* were recently shot in the South Seas, nearly every native in the American group of the Samoan islands being used for the filming of religious and marital ceremonies, traditional feasts, and general native life. Navy and Government officials willingly co-operated.

No small achievement of Walter Wanger's, when he secured the screen rights of Sacha Guitry's *The Illusionist*. Guitry prefers to handle filming himself and rarely parts with his own material, but this time he has given way, and the chief rôle goes to his fellow countryman, Charles Boyer.

Warner Bros.

Among the company's line-up for future production are film versions of eleven stage plays and seventeen novels.

Plays include *Tovarich*, with Claudette Colbert, Basil Rathbone and Charles Boyer; *White Horse Inn*, C. B. Cochran's musical; *Boy Meets Girl*, the Spewaks' Hollywood satire; *Yes, My Darling Daughter; Chalked Out*, drama of Sing Sing; and *On Your Toes*, with Ginger Rogers.

Pictures based on novels will include *The Story of San Michèle*, by Alex Münthe; *Emile Zola*, now in production with Paul Muni; *A Prayer for My Son*, by Hugh Walpole, and *The Great Garrick*, with Brian Aherne in the name part.

Tired of his independent film making and unable to find sufficient starring material, Jimmy Cagney returns to the Warner fold after his next Grand National picture, *Dynamite*. His break with Warners' was a result of his claim that they broke his $4,500 a week contract by compelling him to make more than four pictures a year, and by billing him below Pat O'Brien in *Ceiling Zero*.

And Others . . . .

With *Wee Willie Winkie* clear of the cutting room, Shirley Temple is back in the studios again. Title this time is *Heidi*, and the location is the Swiss Alps. Supporting cast includes Arthur Treacher and Jean Hersholt.

* * *

Frances Marion, well-known script-writer, turns producer for *The Winning of the West*, to be made by Columbia. This is her first job in production. Other pictures planned by Columbia include George Kaufman and Moss Hart's *You Can't Take it with You* (this year's Pulitzer prize play), and *Chopin*, a historical biography.

* * *

Dick Merrill, the airman, has been signed by Pathé, and is starting *Atlantic Flight* immediately.

* * *

A new type of radio dramatisation, contrasting songs, music, drama, and comedy of fifty years ago, was presented over American radio a few weeks ago by Peter Godfrey, English author, dramatist and producer.

Godfrey, founder and director of the Gate Theatre in London, recently arrived in New York to become associated with the movie industry as a director. The dramatisation was his first work for American radio as author and director.

Japan

The German-Italian-Japanese alliance for "cultural and educational co-operation in films," and for mutual action in suppressing pictures undesirable to any of the three Fascist countries, has encouraged Japan to raise an objection to *Yoshivara*, now in production at the Joinville studios, France. The grounds are that the film insults Japan and the Japanese.

Leading man Sessue Hayakawa, Hollywood star of the silent days, cabled a synopsis of the scenario by Maurice Dekobra as proof that no insult was included. Japan, however, still threatens boycott if production continues (which it does).

Japan's attempt at intervention before production is even completed is similar to Germany's threat to Hollywood some months ago. The Nazi Government warned Universal that if *The Road Back* was in any way unfavourable to Germany, it would be banned, and those participating blacklisted for all time.

Germany

Nazi Government Film Prize for 1937 goes to State-Actor Emil Jannings for the Tobis picture *Der Herrscher* ("The Master"). At the gala meeting of the Reichkulturkammer, Dr. Goebbels, "Reich-Minister for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda," declared that Jannings was the pioneer who had been opening new channels for German film art, and that his supreme achievements were well known to the entire world of culture.

An advisory council to deal with problems of an artistic or technical nature was elected at the last general meeting of Ufa. The council consists of two directors, three actors and a writer—among them Carl Froelich, Karl Ritter and Mathias Weidemann, vice-president of the Reichsfilmkammer.

Austria

Dr. Milkas, President of Austria, has bestowed a gold medal on Willy Forst, scenarist and director of *Burgtheater*. The honour is a result of Herr Forst's work in popularising Austrian films abroad.

After many postponements and collapse of production plans among Austrian film concerns, Ernest-Neubach Productions have *Millionaire* before the cameras, with Friedl Czepa and Wolfbach in the leading rôles. Karl Heinz Martins is directing, from a scenario by Hans Sassman. Oskar Schnirch is doing the camerawork.

Switzerland

First studios to be built in the country are now under construction at Bâsle-Munchenstein. Tonfilm, the producing company, will receive a backing from the Government, and is planning to make five features a year, together with publicity and progaganda films.

France

In *Les Perles de la Couronne*, Sacha Guitry's film tracing the history of seven valuable pearls in France, Italy and England, natives of the three countries play their respective parts and speak their respective languages. Guitry has made this experiment in an attempt to internationalise his film and to avoid "dubbing" (i.e. fitting foreign dialogue). Action covers four centuries—from Henry VIII (played by Welsh-born Lyn Harding) to the present day. Audiences from all three countries will be able to understand a third of the film—though the box-office draw of this method has yet to be proved.

All gangster films from England and the States that find their way into France, now have to undergo severe censorship. Reason: recent public enemy pictures have incited numerous crimes.

In spite of Japanese intervention (see *Japan*), production continues on *Yoshivara*, which Pathé is making at Joinville. Max Ophüls is directing.

GERMAINE DULAC, the French "avant-garde" director of *La Souriante Madame Boudet* and *La Coquille et le Clergyman*, has produced an instructional film, *La Cinema au Service de l'Histoire*, to prove that the newsreel can achieve greater artistic merit than the mere recording of current events. Cuttings of newsreels since 1903 have been used—royal meetings, diplomats, rising industries, military reviews—the political and economical milestones on the road to the war of 1914. Then the evolution of Bolshevism and Fascism, and finally the Ethiopian war, ending with a large interrogation mark—what is in store for this mad world?

Following this, Germaine Dulac shot a film attempting to tackle the problem of unemployment in France—blaming the vast number of unemployed on the small craftsmen, who should be taught, she points out, to accommodate themselves to new working measures.

Though still working for France Actualités, a newsreel company which she herself founded in 1932, but which has now been taken over by Agence Havas, she is planning a film on the ill-treatment of children.

With some of her socialist friends—among whom is Marceau Pivert—she is a leading figure in the film section of "Mai 36," a new cultural organisation founded by workmen and intellectuals of the Front Populaire.

REVIEW OF REVIEWS

Edited by H. E. Blyth

Review of the Month

FAREWELL AGAIN. (Tim Whelan—London Films.)
Leslie Banks, Flora Robson, Robert Newton, Maire O'Neill, Robert Cochran.

The picture is based on a real-life incident, which occurred some months ago, when a British regiment, home from India on leave, was ordered out to the Near East again after six hours in dock at Southampton. The story is of the omnibus variety. It takes six different men from different ranks in the regiment, spots them from the crowd, makes them human, individual, likeable. It shows the people who are waiting for them at home, the meaning of those precise six hours in the history of their lifetime. For one minute it makes each man a god, a fate, a demon, an angel in his own little world of private passion. And then the bugle sounds; leave is over; back on that floating Grand Hotel, emblem of a blind but analgesic service, they are not men but troops again.

This is a good picture: a picture of real people. It is sad and funny, like life; stupid and obstinate and wistful. Birth comes, and death; jealousy and trust, and happy, meaningless commonplaces. Pick where you like through a long cast—colonel, captain, sergeant, orderly, doctor—I don't think you'll find one performance out of key, or one scene dishonestly manipulated.

Every member of the audience, of course, will have his special fancy. Mine is for Leslie Banks, whose quiet colonel, who finds he must leave his wife to die in England, is surely the finest and most sensitive thing this fine actor has done since first he began to make pictures. I liked enormously, too, Flora Robson's study of the sick wife; what an artist Miss Robson is, what a lovely, unmasked face she has! Is there one young screen actress in this country with her natural capacity for beauty? I doubt it.

Distributing honours for *Farewell Again* is rather like handing out the presents from a Christmas tree: everyone, from producer down to the smallest "bit" player, gets his package. But the biggest package of all goes to the man who first thought of bringing a bit of real life, for a change, into an important British movie. Except for Hitchcock's pictures, which are freaks in a curiously specialised subdivision of human excitement, the British cinema has told us next to nothing about British people. What do we really know about the waitress who serves our luncheon, the tube driver who takes us so blithely into the tunnel, the printer who sets up the type you are reading now?

There are many things, as I have not infrequently said, that are amiss with the British cinema, but one of them is certainly the shortage of films about British people. Not gallants of the French Revolution, Secret Service officers of White Russia, or Ruritanian princesses, but people—just people. Common people, busy people, jolly people, the sort of people Shakespeare singled out from the streets of Tudor London.

It is rather odd that the first big British picture to catch the full sense of English character should be this troopship story, which was produced by a German, directed by an American, and shot by a Chinese camera-man. Perhaps it is the cast—British from top to bottom—that has worked the miracle. Perhaps it is the sea, or the cloudy English skies; I don't know. But it's there—the magic—and you can't miss it, or shouldn't.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

"Farewell Again"

In a statement issued to *Film Weekly* a little time ago, Erich Pommer explained his future policy and programme. Realism was the keynote. Realism is the keynote of *Farewell Again*. It is a happy augury.

Farewell Again is based upon a common denominator of human experience.

Upon fact. The story of a troopship full of homesick soldiers on leave from India suddenly ordered back to the Near East. Men hungry for their wives, their children, their homes and their sweethearts, allowed only six hours of England.

Farewell Again succeeds in giving us a ship full of human beings. It does not invite inspection of its component parts. In this sense it is a good film.

On several occasions it is a very good film. One has that delightful feeling that one is eavesdropping on events, the hall-mark of film excellence. For this, one can overlook many synthetic hangovers. After all a film about the army presupposes a certain altitude; altruistic officers, service, cheers, and the rest of it. Once the realist producer has chosen the gambit of his general activity, he has got to accept certain limitations, courtesies, and rituals. These may hamper him. Necessary distortions creep in, but his sense of life will inevitably triumph. Thus, *Farewell Again* may contain elements of pathos or over-emphasis (the latter is the defect of naturalism occasionally *manqué*, a continental tendency to dwell, that does not quite ring true). It may end, according to formula, like a cross-word puzzle, hurriedly solved. But it has made its mark as an important film because the human purpose is paramount. Where there is tragedy, it is human tragedy, not a signal for any of those sickening stock abstractions which apparently appeal to certain members of the civilian public. For that reason alone, the film has an important sociological value. It sees straight.

Although a good film is not a film which invites inspection of its component parts, this film should be voluntarily inspected for an important reason. In *Farewell Again*, the small part player has come into his (her) own. In fact the greatest compliment one can pay Mr. Leslie Banks and Flora Robson, is that they are small part players as well. The director and cutter have smoothly distributed performances, without giving undue emphasis to a single one. For once, in a British film, and it is a relatively immense achievement, the complexities of film-making have been subordinated to the urgency of life. No exhibitionism, no snobbism, no "culture."

—Peter Brooke.

STORM IN A TEACUP. (Victor Saville and Ian Dalrymple—London Films.)

Sara Allgood, Vivien Leigh, Rex Harrison, Cecil Parker, Ursula Jeans, Eliot Makeham.

Storm in a Teacup is one of the most satisfactory pictures I ever remember. It is not, perhaps, a milestone in film history, not a classic of this, that or the other, but it is a good, plain, lovable and honest picture, and I should not be afraid of recommending it to anyone. The film is set in

Scotland during a municipal election. It shows how a pompous provost nearly loses his seat through the storm aroused over his treatment of a poor woman and her mongrel. The picture has a few faults, but a multitude of virtues. It is written with humour and good sense, directed as a film should be, untheatrically, and acted as if the players loved it. Vivien Leigh, I thought, touched just the right note as the provost's forthright daughter, and looks more and more like becoming England's No. 1 romantic film actress. Rex Harrison, in his second film, makes an exciting job of the journalist's part. Given the right direction, nothing, so far as I can see, can possibly stop him. I give Miss Leigh and Mr. Harrison as England's 1937 double for screen fame.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

Hand on heart, I promise you this is the most intelligently amusing comedy made in England for years. It is positively un-British in its independence of slapstick, absurdity, or characters with "comedian" written in large, invisible letters on their brows. Maybe the best thing of all about the picture is the sparkling spirit which pervades it. The acting is good and all the people are real and understandable, even the inflated ass of a provost, skilfully played by Cecil Parker. Rex Harrison, the best handler of romantic comedy we have in this country, Vivien Leigh, Sara Allgood, Scruffy the dog, and Eliot Makeham as a judge, are contributors to a smooth, chuckling entertainment for which Victor Saville, as director and producer, takes the best-earned bow of this year's British films.

—Stephen Watts, *The Sunday Express*

Critical Summary.

In a month with more starred films than usual in our list it is pleasant indeed to place two English pictures at the top. *Farewell Again* and *Storm in a Teacup* both succeed in bringing the ordinary, everyday people of this country to the screen and that is all too rare a virtue in our studios.

A STAR IS BORN. (William A. Wellman—Selznick International.)
Janet Gaynor, Fredric March, Adolphe Menjou.

This is very simply a little sketch—romantic, too—of success in Hollywood. It's the story of a marriage of two stars—one on the upgrade, the other sinking fast into oblivion. Such things, I believe, do happen in the Western colony. It has been Fredric March's good fortune to play the husband's rôle, and never has he done anything better. Bitterness is necessary, and a kind of silent defeat, or something of that sort, and he does this so well that even the suicide doesn't seem to require explanation. You can believe in it, which isn't usual in movie suicides. It seems reasonable even in spite of the Technicolour sunset as a background. Then there's a funeral scene which should be noted, enriched by a vicious note as the crowding fans break down the self-control of the widowed star. A nice touch. There are many nice touches. And some of them, I might add, are contributed by Adolphe Menjou, as a producer who seems to be always in his right mind.

—John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

A Star is Born is a Hollywood story of, by and for its people. It has the usual preface, attesting to the fictional quality of the characters and incidents depicted, but it is none the less the most accurate mirror ever held before the glittering, tinselled, trivial, generous, cruel and ecstatic world that is Hollywood. That, in itself, guarantees its dramatic interest, for there is no place on this twentieth-century earth more fascinating—not even that enchanting make-believe republic which James Hilton called Shangri-La. There is a vibrance and understanding in its writing, a feeling for telling detail and a sympathy for the people it touches. It is not a maudlin picture—not nearly so heroic, let us say, as its dramatic corollary, *Stage Door*. Janet Gaynor's movie-struck Esther Blodgett is not a caricature; Fredric March's waning Norman Maine is not an outrageous "ham"; Adolphe Menjou's Oliver Niles (of Oliver Niles Productions) is no more—and no less—human than many producers are. They are honest, normal, well-intentioned folk; different, of course, for Hollywood would make them so; but we can believe in them and understand them and be moved by their tragedy. Conviction can bring any formula to life.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

Critical Summary.

Film stories of life back stage, on Broadway and 42nd Street, are legion, yet only very rarely does Hollywood make a film about itself. Its publicity departments and not its directors are responsible for telling us what happens on and off the set. Perhaps *Blonde Bombshell*, that whirlwind satire, rapped too many knuckles in the film colony, and it was then tactfully decided to avoid films about film stars. So *A Star is Born* is notable, and in more ways than one, for it also provides an exception to the rule that they never come back. *Seventh Heaven* made Janet Gaynor a world-famous star, but in recent years heads have been shaken over her future. Now it seems as if a star is re-born.

W.F.N. Selection

Farewell Again	*	*
Storm in a Teacup	*	*
You Only Live Once		*
The Last of Mrs. Cheyney		*
Captains Courageous		*
Shall We Dance?		*

Other Films Covered in this Issue

A Star is Born

Maytime

Seventh Heaven

Moonlight Sonata

The Trooping of the Colour

Der Ammenkoenig

The Price of Ignorance

Nonchalant faun . . .

SHALL WE DANCE? (Mark Sandrich—RKO.)
Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers, Harriet Hoctor, Edward Everett Horton, Eric Blore.

Comical complications make up the story of *Shall We Dance?* but there is much more to this picture than plot. There is a marvellous solo dance by Fred Astaire in the glorified engine room of a ship. Machinery marks changes in rhythm to provide Fred Astaire with one of the cleverest dances of his career. Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire offer a delightful dance on roller skates, and Ginger Rogers gives an irresistible performance. On her superlative work in *Shall We Dance?* one must doubt whether there is a more attractive personality in pictures to-day. Edward Everett Horton adds a deliciously dithering background in the part of manager to the ballet dancer and Eric Blore has one of the best moments in the film when he is arrested and seeks to let his friends know that he is held in Susquehannah Street police station. Again and again we find American films, sometimes of inferior merit and sometimes of as great merit as *Shall We Dance?* made more attractive by incidents added to a plot in harmony with its theme and the people in it. This inventiveness of American film writers gives to their work an exhilaration while we are watching their films and something most pleasurable to remember.

—Seton Margrave, *The Daily Mail*

Am I growing blasé, or is the Astaire-Rogers brand of entertainment wearing a little thin? If you care to see another long-range sex duel, with Miss Rogers pouting prettily and Mr. Astaire smiling his twisted smile like a wounded but still nonchalant faun, then this is your picture. Despite some songs that may or may not become the rage (I wouldn't know), and some extremely agile and graceful dancing, I couldn't learn to care. Eric Blore and Edward Everett Horton assist.

—Campbell Dixon, *The Daily Telegraph*

"You Only Live Once"

MAYTIME. (Robert Z. Leonard—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.)
Jeanette MacDonald, Nelson Eddy, John Barrymore.

Before going into the whys and the wherefores, dull things at best, let this enthusiastic bulletin be entered into the departmental record: *Maytime* is the most entrancing operetta the screen has given us. It establishes Jeanette MacDonald as the possessor of the cinema's loveliest voice—this with all deference to the probably superior off-screen voices of Lily Pons, Grace Moore and Gladys Swarthout—and it affirms Nelson Eddy's pre-eminence among the baritones of filmdom. The screen can do no wrong while these two are singing; when, in addition, it places a splendid production behind them, the result approaches perfection. *Maytime* does just that.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

A sugary conception notable mainly for the singing of Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy. It is a vague mixture of *Bitter Sweet* and *Smilin' Through*, wholly obvious in conception and none too convincing in characterisation or situation.

Directly one sees Jeanette MacDonald appear on the screen as an old woman, one realises that there is going to be a lot of sentimental reminiscences.

The settings are exceedingly picturesque, and the operatic excerpts well staged. Technically, the picture reaches a very high standard.

—Lionel Collier, *Picturegoer*

SEVENTH HEAVEN. (Henry King—20th Century-Fox.)
Simone Simon, James Stewart, Jean Hersholt.

Both Miss Simone Simon and Mr. James Stewart have the power to give sincerity to the most obvious and most abused scenes of grief, to the flagrantly manufactured pathos of their parts. Once the tribute has been paid there is little else which need concern us. The film is so incredibly sentimental that even the two or three moments of genuine pathos seem to be unreal. It begins with a scene in a Paris sewer, passes through the trials of war, plays continuously on a note of religiosity which makes one shudder, and winds up in much the same ecstasy of spirit as that in which a child might witness a transformation scene at a Drury Lane pantomime. The Diane of Miss Simone is genuinely child-like, and Mr. Stewart, as the conventionally romantic Chico, manages to combine sincerity with an agreeable touch of egotism, continually expressed in his declaration that he is a very remarkable fellow. Indeed, both Mr. Stewart and Miss Simon are remarkable, at least in this film, for without them this numerical order of heaven might never have been counted. —*The Times*

In a nasty sentimental way this is really a pro-war picture, depending on an idealisation of superstition and spirituality and a false tenderness toward simple working folk to stir up a sympathy toward the activities in which they participate. And they participate in war. However, this is kept pretty much in the background; I doubt whether it will have a poisonous effect. As entertainment, the film is passable hokum. It is put over by such steady character-actors as Victor Kilian, John Qualen, and J. Edward Bromberg. Gregory Ratoff shouts his head off in one sequence, and Simone Simon and James Stewart are the stars of this remade "film classic."

—Meyer Levin, *Esquire*

THE LAST OF MRS. CHEYNEY. (Richard Boleslawski—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.)
Joan Crawford, Robert Montgomery, William Powell, Nigel Bruce, Frank Morgan, Benita Hume.

Fay Cheyney, the last of whom can again be seen, was a lady, although her past was not only shady but positively vermilion. She was not a rogue, this roguish Mrs. Cheyney: Lonsdale knew far too much for that. Under her finger-print-proofed exterior she had a heart of gold, loaned out most of the time to a playboy member of the aristocracy. Joan Crawford, whose improvement as an actress well justifies the lion in any of his contemporary roars, plays Cheyney with the right indifference. It is a smart portrait, in pert Peter Arno fashion. Montgomery's Arthur is equally good. Powell's burglar-butler is not Powell at his best : he thrives only on the winning side. The actual background, of lofty English homes, is rapturously wrong in many cases. Having made an exceedingly amusing film, it would perhaps be a good idea if Metro now let it be known that we really have seen the last of Mrs. Cheyney.

—Connery Chappell, *The Sunday Dispatch*

This picture has been done before in a much better way by far more suitable performers and under more skilful direction. As a réchauffé of what in its original form was a neat bit of sophisticated Lonsdale comedy it has grown tiresome and fantastic. Joan Crawford is about as little suggestive of a female Raffles as she is of a society mannequin. William Powell should have exchanged parts with Robert Montgomery, and the crowd of society wrong-uns are each and all thoroughly unconvincing. We enjoy the inanities of Frank Morgan and the fatuousness of Nigel Bruce, but the clumsiness and ineptitude of the direction are irritating.

—Sydney W. Carroll, *The Sunday Times*

YOU ONLY LIVE ONCE. (Fritz Lang—Walter Wanger, United Artists.) Sylvia Sidney, Henry Fonda.

With her wonderful eyes ready to brim over with tears, Sylvia Sidney again plays a heroine who sticks to her man throughout a cruel fate which ends in tragedy. As a Shaw character says, anyone with the feelings of a lady meets her man on his prison discharge. Miss Sidney and Henry Fonda play with all the emotion possible (which is a good deal) and the picture is produced with all the hallmarks of a tale of monstrous injustice —the hounding of an ex-convict who tries to Go Straight. Unfortunately, I could not see this. The sympathy asked for is so much sloppy bunk. However, the suspense is genuinely thrilling, expecially the jail escape, and there is the usual meeting behind prison bars, with lighting effects, as well as some moments of real beauty. Emotionally and dramatically this is a thrilling picture, so long as you have not time to worry about its logic.

—P. L. Mannock, *The Daily Herald*

Something that has been received at various sources as a social indictment is on view under the title *You Only Live Once*. I couldn't find any conscious blame-laying in the picture. As a matter of fact, I couldn't find anything at all that detracted from a good story well told. True, it's about a three-time convict who is released from prison with the warning "Go straight, or you're done for." And he has about as much chance of going straight, at least in *this* picture, as a bit of gossip. What happens to him after his release is a series of melodramatic coincidences that have been so excitingly pieced together that I willingly smothered my incredulity.

—Katharine Best, *Stage*

It is my opinion that once the audience's sympathy is aroused, a character may enact any crime, however fundamentally repellent, without losing the audience's respect. The murder committed by Fonda in my film's dénouement is so outrageous, so shocking, that I admit we were tempted to change the story. But we realised that this would have weakened our theme considerably, so we chose another course. We justified his crime. To do it, we had to present him, in the early sequences, as a victim of circumstances, as a boy helpless and afraid, caught in the law's mesh, convicted for a murder of which he was innocent.

—Fritz Lang

CAPTAINS COURAGEOUS. (Victor Fleming—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.)
Spencer Tracy, Freddie Bartholomew, Lionel Barrymore, Melvyn Douglas,

Captains Courageous, based on Kipling's story, is full of the sound of the sea and the beauty of sail, of the humours and tragedies of sailormen. I can think of no previous film in which the sea setting has been made with more beauty—and more realism. The Gloucester fishing schooners of the hard-bitten and courageous captains are as graceful as yachts, and when they crowd on canvas and race homewards with the season's catch they rouse the Masefield and the Conrad that sleeps in all rough islanders. There is only one woman character in this film, and she is brought in merely to cook an unimportant meal. It is a man's picture and a boy's picture, and yet she will have a steel-walled heart who does not cry—and cry steadily—when she sees it. The theme is intensely sentimental. Lionel Barrymore is a lively, likeable skipper, full of strange oaths and insults, but the film belongs to Freddie—a performance of real talent—and to Tracy as the boisterous, big-hearted, heroic Portuguese. Compare this with his part in *Fury* and you realise Tracy's claim to being one of the three best actors in Hollywood.

—Ian Coster, *The Evening Standard*

The story, of course, is of the change in a boy's outlook when he is thrown from luxury into the company of happy, rough, hard-working fishermen. It is a very beautiful tale, artistically told, with all the things—dialogue, situations and scenery—that take possession of an audience and swing their emotions at will. The sea scenes are emotionally beautiful. They mesmerise the eye and hypnotise one's senses. And the acting is grand. Freddie Bartholomew has never done better work. The subtle shades he gets into his acting are really surprising. I never suspected he was such an artist. The beginning is protracted, and does not indicate the fine things to come. Then, at the end, there are some scenes that are superfluous. The director puts a lump in your throat so thoroughly that he nearly chokes you.

—Richard Haestier, *The Star*

Critical Summary.

How many child stars can really act? This is a problem of considerable interest. Recently Mickey Rooney, in *The Devil Takes the Count*, has proved conclusively that he can. Of Freddie Bartholomew, Graham Greene wrote not long ago: "He never begins to act. He never has begun as far as I know." *Captains Courageous* would now seem to disprove this.

MOONLIGHT SONATA. (Lothar Mendes—Pall Mall Productions.)
Paderewski, Marie Tempest, Charles Farrell, Barbara Greene, Eric Portman.

If ever there was a one-man picture it is this. The supreme virtuoso begins to play as the curtain rises; he is playing at the close; and whenever he is not playing, there is the most negligible of plots.

But when he plays!

It seemed to me, as I watched *Moonlight Sonata*, that Paderewski has all the old force, all the old tenderness, all the old rapture in understanding, and whenever he has to speak there is something touching, and beautiful in his dignity. For the rest I fear I can say little. Marie Tempest is, as ever, mistress of whatever scene she plays, with a sense of timing that should be a lesson for all; but there is nothing to it, and, believing not a whit in Mario the adventurer (and even less in his wardrobe), we are not interested in the adventure.

—E. V. L., *Punch*

We have one of the greatest of all pianists playing a Chopin Polonaise, the Liszt Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2, the Moonlight Sonata, and his own Minuet in G, and the camera bringing those rare sensitive hands and marvellously expressive face closer to our acquaintance than would be possible in any concert hall. Paderewski may be a distant and austere figure on the concert platform: here he is lovably human. While the fire of his genius still sustains him and the years have added only dignity to his figure, the cinema has found him and robbed mortality of some of its worst spoils. Actually the story is slight in substance, and far from appealing enough in significance. It is a reconstruction of a romance in which the Moonlight Sonata, played by Paderewski, has woven its influence into young people's lives in successive generations. *Moonlight Sonata* seemed to me to fall short of perfection in the manner of its end. It is much overdone in sentimentality. But of Paderewski and Miss Tempest there could not be too much.

—*The Birmingham Mail*

Critical Summary.

The feebleness of this story was condemned by almost every critic, yet one and all found Paderewski magnificent. Time without number it is the story and dialogue writers in English films who let the production down. It is these people, more than any others, who seem consistently incapable of pulling their weight.

THE TROOPING OF THE COLOUR. (Pathé Newsreel on Dufaycolor.)

The production of this reel of 850 feet is something of a marker in the history of newsreel. Not because of subject or quality, but because for the first time a successful colour newsreel has been produced in a commercially feasible manner.

Unlike some other systems in use, the negative of Dufaycolor can be duplicated, an essential in practical newsreel work, and any number of prints can be taken off. So special cameras or projectors or even very complicated processing is needed.

The quality of the photography is not consistent, some of it appears crude, but in the main the colour is realistic and adds immeasurably to the spectacle. The reel was edited by Fred Watts and the commentary spoken by Roy de Groot. The camera work was done by Jock Gemmell (from the main Horseguards' position), Arthur Farmer (responsible for the close-ups of the king), Charles Martin and Kenneth Gordon (from the Horseguards').

The Dufay system of colour photography is one of the cinema's oldest—but recently it has been improved, and its parent company enlarged under the new banner of Dufay-Chromex. From the newsreel point of view, Dufay has the enormous advantage over other systems that it combines the best modern standard of colour definition, with processing at almost the speed of black and white. Pathé linked up with Dufay to film the Coronation and again, a few days later, the Naval Review. Both stories were to a certain extent marred by extremely bad light, and by inexperienced camera work. The third attempt in the Trooping of the Colour, however, shows none of the previous blemishes.

—P. F.

Foreign Films

DER AMMENKOENIG. (Hans Steinhoff—German.)
Richard Romanowsky, Kathe Gold, Gustav Knuth, Marie-luise Claudius, Fita Benkhoff.

This film, directed by Herr Hans Steinhoff, is described as "a rollicking jest against prudery and moral-hypocrisy." It is actually an advertisement for the procreation of many children. No doubt for this purpose prudery must be to a certain extent overcome, and in the film, which is set in the eighteenth century, the machinations of a Minister of Morality are set at naught and a thoroughly hearty, painstaking, and German eroticism is triumphant. A feeble and spectacled Margrave, a thorough milksop, and his absurdly artificial Court are reformed into fertility and manliness by the influence of an incredibly sturdy blacksmith, the "king of the nurses," who has been chosen by a guild of nursemaids to foster and protect them. The ethics of the film appear to be thoroughly muddled, and its propaganda is hardly improved by being laboriously disguised as gay and frolicsome humour. But the settings are charming, whether in the scenes of peasant life, the processions and festivals in the country, or in the scenes at Court, with fantastically rococo interiors, or beautiful views of eighteenth-century parks and gardens. —*The Times*

THE PRICE OF IGNORANCE. (Swiss.)

In any really civilised community, films like this would be unnecessary. The facts of sexual diseases would be made part of the knowledge of adolescents as a matter of course. It is unsatisfactory that training in social hygiene should have to be mixed up with emotional entertainment.

Nevertheless, this film is in many ways far superior to others of its type.

There is little false prudery; the sickening facts are not shirked (and some of the shots of syphilitic children are sickening enough); and the film has the courage to be constructive.

The basis of the film is Swiss, and much of it is extremely interesting as an essay in film construction. The direction and cutting are often imaginative. The stories of individuals—a young medical student who fears that he may have been infected. and a mechanic whose infection is transmitted to his baby—are related to the daily routine of the inhabitants of a city about their work and their relaxation. The method derives from the "symphonic" experiments of Ruttman in "Berlin."

—Frank Evans, *The Newcastle Evening Chronicle*

Music Can Provide Only Interior Rhythm says Alberto Cavalcanti

In an address given at the Second International Congress of Music in Florence

DURING the past few years, the purely musical film has reached such perfection that one is bound to pay tribute to the Americans for this, at least. Such precious morsels as the park scene in *Born to Dance*, with Eleanor Powell, must be treated with respect.

To what extent such achievements result from the skilful use of the best elements of the theatre, treated cinematographically, by film-technicians, I cannot say.

In Europe why do we not approach the musical film from a different angle? I suggest this is well worth consideration.

Of one thing I am convinced—the music in other films, both in America and elsewhere is, as a rule, mediocre.

When the scenarists see that there is too much dialogue, they think up a nondescript, uneventful scene, insert in the sound column the word "music," and say to themselves, "The musician will settle that." (So far, well-written scenarios with music appropriately added have been an exception.)

Then, after the film has been edited, it may happen that the action at such and such a point is too slow. Immediately comes the decision, "We'll have to put in some music." Yes, and once more, "The musician will settle that."

It would be much easier, however, to choose a musician to collaborate with the scenarist and keep in mind the essential conception of the film. His work instead of being merely a stop-gap, would then have real value, and besides, would help to make the whole consistent.

According to this ideal, the music should be selected to suit the pictures; but, for the moment at least, we mustn't ask too much of the producers.

Director *v.* Musician

A film is a collective work. One cannot insist too often on this, especially where the directors are concerned.

In order to analyse the exact relationship between the director and the musician, one must admit that usually the chief ambition of the director is to establish himself, at any cost, as an artist. This often results in a ridiculous tyranny.

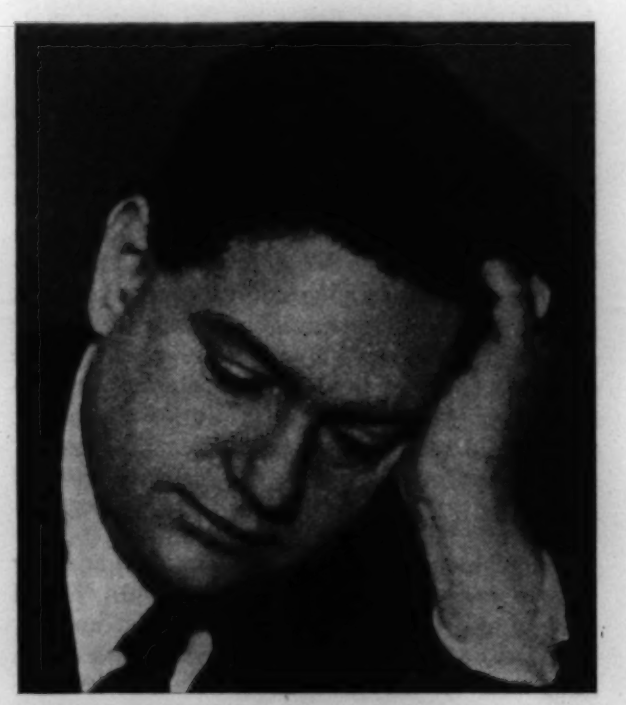
Let us consider the survivors in the department of music.

Among the directors are individuals who profess to be connoisseurs of that art. Heaven protect us! They have such dangerously personal ideas on the subject—which, unfortunately, musicians will never be able to express.

It is my opinion that they are responsible for the exact synchronism which musicians have just succeeded in missing. If I may be permitted a digression—I must confess that I am a sworn enemy of synchronism. It has been the main cause of the slow development of the real sound-film, and I am delighted to find that synchronism, not only of music, but also of speech and noise, is receiving less and less attention to-day. I could give you innumerable examples, but the most typical is the *March of Time*, where lively commentary and a rather noisy musical accompaniment lend undeniable colour to indifferent pictures.

I was about to accuse the directors with musical pretensions, of having invented those unpalatable interludes, where every step and movement is accompanied with a clashing of cymbals or of drums.

The outside rhythm of a film must be created by the editing. Music can provide only interior rhythm.



Darius Milhaud

But the directors have had no difficulty in finding other fads to take the place of synchronism, and they are every bit as tiresome. The musical setting, or rather atmosphere, has become a necessity. For them it is the solution of all the problems relating to sound in the film.

In one film, lately, there was a night sequence, showing a cab in the streets of a sleeping town. The noise of the horseshoes and their echo (which had been recorded elsewhere) made the perfect accompaniment for the scene. The musician realised it at once, but the director had "ideas." He wanted to have music, and he demanded it in such a way that the musician was forced to write it. There is little need to add that it went into the film in spite of the composer's wishes to the contrary, and the fact that the director came to the conclusion that it wasn't exactly all that he had imagined.

Once again—had the musician worked in conjunction with the film from the start, there would have been no argument, but an added motive.

In an article entitled "Music for Films," which appeared in a new Paris paper, *Cinematographe*, Jean Wiener says:

"Every part must contribute to the whole, and not mar its effect but help to make it acceptable to the public. Modesty is the most indispensable virtue so far as film musicians are concerned."

"One can trust the composer if his music is not 'heard' but is linked so closely with the whole that it cannot be detached."

"There ought to be interruptions, or 'breathing spaces,' in the music throughout the film; and one must be aware neither of its starting nor of its finishing. It has to *grow* from the noise of a door, for example, or a sob, or laughter, and fade with an expression for which it has been the medium, with a pause in the script, as part of a balanced theme, or hidden behind something more realistic. One gets the impression only too often, on the introduction of music, that the conductor has come along with his baton and is standing there leading his orchestra. This is so absurd, in the midst of dramatic emotions, that one consigns music and everything connected with it to the devil."

It is highly commendable on the part of Jean Wiener to throw all the responsibility on the musician. However, I think the directors ought to share the blame for the wrong use of music in films.

Of course that applies only to *some* directors. It is time I said a word on behalf of my friends who admit as I do, that they know nothing about music. They are simply good managers in the workroom of the studio; yet they often make the best films. What is their impresson of most of the musicians with whom they have "tried" to work? It is that concert music is the only kind that matters to them. Everything else, particularly the film, is simply a means to a commercial end.

They have scarcely noticed that if the microphone was successfully ignored during the first years of its existence, by concerts or the opera, it was none the less a sign of a new era. They scorned the young people who wished to avoid so-called "pure" forms of music, and they failed to realise that music, in post-war days, had to escape from professedly intellectual audiences and try to find real support with a wider public. They didn't understand that film and radio are essentially inventions catering to the needs of the masses at the present day; that it is not technique that matters, but conception.

"Moral" limitations

We all know that even now too little is written for the films, the radio, and "the mob"; and too much for concerts and the elite.

It was the general belief, at one time, that the microphone was capable of transmitting only certain things. Nonsense!

It has made such rapid progress that everything can be broadcast. The microphone's limitations are *moral* ones; and one can easily forget the microphone if one understands the public that is at the back of it.

Another point is that my colleagues and I have met very few musicians who realise how often film music has to be cut.

MUSIC

Wagner, Verdi and the Film
by Darius Milhaud

(*From the Italian Magazine* '*Cinema*').

When the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino did me the honour of inviting me to speak at the Congresso di Musica and suggested the argument "The Wagnerian solution for the lyric drama; is it also valid for the Cinema?", I must confess that I was on the point of asking for a different subject. But I accepted.

No one more than I recognises the colossal importance of Wagnerian Opera. Equally no one could be more grateful than I to have been born late enough to avoid the prevalent fashion, and to have come into the world at a time when the giant's influence was dying—an influence which very nearly compromised and suffocated the entire musical world.

1902, the year of the first performance of Pelleas, at last marked the birth of a free epoch, and little by little the voices which had remained independent, but which had been shouted down by the Wagnerian thunder, could begin to make themselves heard, to diffuse their finer vibrations —the voice of Gounod, the voice of Verdi. . . .

But to return to the theme. "Did Wagner definitely give a 'solution' to the lyrical drama?" I do not think so. First of all "solution" would seem defructification, a blind alley. And music is always on the move. It cannot crystallise.

I am the last person to adopt this Wagnerian premise, and then apply it to music for the cinema. The ideals of the "Master of Bayreuth" have always antagonised me. My *coeur de Provencal* has always been suffocated by the rhetoric, which guided this particular type of philosophical-cum-musical pathos. But what finally annoys me is the fact that this so-called solution given by Wagner to lyrical drama (based on the *leit-motif* which is attached to a character or concept) is a solution of the elementary school. Isn't it a little childish to precede the entrance of a character by his theme? Doesn't the obvious facility of this procedure finish by seeming very cheap?

Cater for the Masses

Of course it would be possible to connect this childish simplicity with cinema music. Directly the sound film had been invented, it sought to attract the public, to cater for the masses in obvious and popular forms. The *leit-motif* was the evident formula. It has been exploited to limits which would have fulfilled Wagner's wildest dreams.

Entire films were constructed upon a single theme, in the same way that a scenario would be drafted about the personality of one star. This single theme was manipulated, twisted and untwisted in a welter of sickly orchestrations, insinuating, variating, all of them dripping with insipidity. It hammered on the heads of the audience, imprisoned them, weakened them. When the film was over, the theme, evaporated from the skin, echoed in the ears like the memory of an orgy, with a feeling of sickening nausea. Then that was not all. This clinging theme left the frame of its picture and spread abroad into the remotest hamlets, to city, suburbs, to town villas, in short to every corner of the earth, thanks to gramophone and radio.

Luckily this state of affairs has not continued indefinitely. The procedure has been considered unprofitable. The cinema, in this musical straitjacket, risked finding itself deprived of any note of the unexpected, of any possibility of imagination. And, almost directly one mentions unexpectedness or imagination, one is opposed to the Wagnerian standpoint. So much the better. No liberation could be more healthy.

I was thinking about all this the other evening, listening to the admirable performance of *Othello* presented by the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino. What a lesson! Nothing constrained, nothing foreseen. Everything alive, full of enthusiasm. A constant revitalisation of the melody, sustained by an energetic, immensely powerful sense of drama. This I felt with ever-growing certainty, to be the genuine solution of lyrical drama. Because this ideal adapted itself to every system, because it was life itself. The great Verdi will triumph over Wagner in posterity.

And thinking of the speech which I had been invited to make for the Congresso, I understood why I had hesitated. It is not Wagner who could offer a solution to the music of the cinema. Verdi alone could do that, because his music moved with that sense of liberty indispensable to any dramatic expression.

(*Translation by Peter Brooke*)

Alberto Cavalcanti (contd.)

We have met very few musicians, too, who have understood that 90 per cent of film music must be recorded pianissimo. How often the objection is raised, "But you can't hear *my music* any more!" (You know, however, that there is a kind of music that one hears quite well, even though it is scarcely perceptible). And when music has been made for a film, don't you think it ought no longer to be "my music" but "the music of the film"?

The queer thing is that it is not the best musicians who give us the most trouble.

I have worked with many whose collaboration has been not only a pleasure but a success; Maurice Jaubert, for example, and the young, talented, English musician, Benjamin Britten. I should like too to do homage to others—all those with whom I hope to have the honour of working one day. And in this respect I shall mention only one name, that of Darius Milhaud, who knew so well, even before the advent of the sound film, the kind of music that was necessary for the screen.

Sound, apart from speech and music, has become an element of the first importance in the film—with the achievement of perfection in the microphone and the innumerable possibilities it offers.

We all know that there is a *picture* technique—with immense possibilities, manipulation of the camera, editing, etc.—but in my opinion, the parallel technique of real sound has been neglected.

Sounds may be recorded; they have rhythm and they are as necessary in a film as dialogue, music and pictures. Few directors are aware of this. Few musicians are interested.

In conclusion, it ought to be understood that film music has to be written in the first place, for the film and especially for an audience which is only vaguely related to a concert audience—in numbers and in mentality.

The musician must understand, as well as the director, that a film is a collective work in which they form only two parts of the intricate machinery. When they do at last understand, things will be infinitely easier. The hoped-for results will be achieved; sound will be on the right road to development, and the relationship of one branch of film to another will be correctly established.

Copyright on Records

Two or three years ago, the gramophone companies won a law case based upon their claim that the recording of a piece of music on a gramophone disc created a copyright in the disc quite distinct from the composer's copyright in the music.

Immediately following this success, they notified the cinema exhibitors that in future gramophone discs would not be allowed to be used in cinemas for incidental music unless the exhibitors first obtained a licence.

The Cinema Exhibitors' Association objected on principle to taking out this new licence. Exhibitors already paid a fee to the Performing Rights Society.

The Association discovered a company that was prepared to sell exhibitors' gramophone discs without charging a fee for public performance; and declined to negotiate with the gramophone group.

The chief fear was, that having once "got its teeth" into the industry, the gramophone companies would raise their fees year after year.

By way of answer, the Group last year issued a scale of fees, and announced their willingness to 'fix' these for ten years.

But the C.E.A. still maintained its attitude of 'Nothing doing.'

Now the C.E.A. has ended its contract with the company that was providing free-use discs, and has accepted the agreement with the gramophone group.

In coming to agreement with the group, they have announced as a reason 'the terms being now satisfactory.'

The terms 'now satisfactory' are precisely the same scale as that offered by the Group a year ago.

There is, however, one conditional variation.

Non-members of the C.E.A. have to pay the full scale. Members of the C.E.A. get a 33⅓ per cent discount!

Considering that the gramophone group was never at war with non-members of the C.E.A., many of whom supported the group at a time when the C.E.A. would have nothing to do with them, this 33⅓ per cent special favour seems to be bestowed on the wrong people.

But that's the way of the world.

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NEWSREEL RUSHES *by the Commentator*

Historic Mistakes

"The newsreel . . . is rushing breathlessly to oblivion." Thus John Grierson, in a previous issue of *W.F.N.*, expressed the thoughts of a vast army of filmgoers. World events of the past year seem to have conspired to show up the British newsreels at their most cowardly, most incompetent. Almost each month has seen another nail driven home into the newsreel coffin, with a resounding "wham." A few recent blows: the failure of the reels to face the issue of the year's labour disturbances, i.e. the sit-down strike in France and the U.S., and the London bus strike —their failure to please renter, exhibitor or public over the Coronation—above all, their boycott of the century's most amazing story—the transmutation of King Edward VIII into the Duke of Windsor.

When the abdication so scared the newsreels, that their comments resembled the squeakings of frightened rabbits, it may well have been said that the coffin's brass handles were being screwed on. Many have felt that the past month has seen the fitting of the lid—among them, Mr. Ernest Fredman, Editor of one of the leading trade sheets *The Daily Film Renter*.

Mr. Fredman's paper is exclusively interested in topics that interest the exhibitors. He seldom discusses newsreel policy, because the newsreels rarely earn better than bottom place in a cinema programme (Feature 1st, Disney 2nd, etc.). But on 8th June, in his "Daily" gossip column, Mr. Fredman wrote: "Story . . . of the newsreels not putting out any pictures of the Duke of Windsor's wedding—has occasioned considerable comment . . . I feel the newsreel people have made a lamentable mistake . . . the news units have practically surrendered their birthright . . . . After this, it's . . . obvious that they'll be so scared of including pictures of any contentious personality, that there's a distinct danger of the reels becoming a picture gallery for the opening of bridges and launching of battleships. . . ."

That outburst—from so unexpected a quarter —reflects the temper of the public, through the magnifying mirror of the trade. How did the newsreels come to make what may well become an historic mistake?

Case History of a Failure

On May 25th, four men walked into the shining new offices of British Movietonews in London's Soho Square. They were: R. S. Howard, Editor of Gaumont-British News; Cecil Snape of Universal; Louis Behr of Pathé; and G. T. Cummings of Paramount. Inside, they were met by Gerald Sanger, Movietone's Production Chief, for a hush-hush heart-to-heart. Within a few minutes they had reached complete agreement. The Wedding of the Duke of Windsor was BARRED from every screen in Britain. Britain's cinema addicts had lost the year's biggest story after the Coronation. The trade had lost the chance to pack every movie house in the country solid, for days on end.

So quickly did the newsreel's "big five" make their decision, that at first there were rumours of hands being forced by Government pressure, or interference from powerful vested interests. Later information showed that they had acted entirely off their own bat. What underlying reasons led to the anti-Windsor policy?

* * *

The newsreels' official statement that "they were respecting the Duke of Windsor's desire for privacy," was plainly ridiculous, when every newspaper was screaming headlines round the world.

So millions were disappointed, and millions more, who believe in the future of screenews, are beginning to ask: "How long are we to be ruled by a dictatorship of bunglers? How did the present bigwigs get their jobs? By what qualifications do they hold them?"

U.S. Mystery Story

Founded twenty-seven years ago, Pathé News is America's oldest newsreel. In the days when Pathé still had the field to itself, a young New York engineer was first becoming interested in the new industry. His name was Courtland Smith. After the war, when the Fox silent reel was started, Smith joined it, to do technical research. When sound hit the screen, few people imagined that the cumbersome system of synchronised gramophone records could ever be used by the newsreels. Nor did Courtland Smith. Instead, he persuaded Fox to try out a gadget that he had developed—the sound printed in a track along the edge of the film. Thus Fox Movietonews was born—sound was revolutionised—Smith was made famous. He remained virtual boss of Movietone until William Fox crashed—then Smith became President of Pathé News. With his steering, the oldest reel became, in the eyes of many of the critics, also America's best. It scooped the world with an exclusive newsreel contract with the Dionne Quins—first in black and white, now in colour.

In recent years, Courtland Smith has left most of the day to day running to General Manager, Jack S. Connolly. It was Connolly, last year, who beat the field, by spotting Alfred M. Landon as Republican nominee for President, and running a Pathé News story, which at the time was called the "madman's prophecy." Connolly acted as liaison with Britain's Pathé Gazette. He was in London for the Coronation—took back 25,000 ft. of film. Actual production of Pathé News stories was done by Editor Harold Wondsell.

Slowly, step by step, these three had built up the modern, fast moving Pathé News. Suddenly, all three dropped it like a hot potato. Within a few days of Jack Connolly's return to the U.S. from his Coronation jaunt, came news that he, Courtland Smith, and Harold Wondsell had resigned. Three weeks later, the why and how of the Smith-Connolly-Wondsell disappearing act, remains a major newsreel mystery.

The wildest rumour, therefore the one most worth repeating, is that America is soon to be startled with the advent of a sixth newsreel, completely in colour—and that "the trio" is to be in on its foundation. If so, they are heading for the newsreel tops.

Rivalry in Giant Lenses

Up to a month ago, Gaumont-British claimed to own the largest newsreel camera lens, with a focal length of 40 ins. Then Paramount came out with a new contender, a lens of which they published every conceivable figure except the all-important focal length. But the general opinion was that Paramount were up to 50 inch. A few days before the Coronation, Pathé announced a 56-inch lens made by Taylor Hobson! Object of the new lens was primarily to take shots of the King and Queen on the Buckingham Palace balcony from the steps of the Victoria Memorial —roughly a distance of 400 yards. The result on the screen was disappointing. Reasons: 1. The picture was distinctly unsteady—for with such enormous magnification, the slightest movement ruins the picture; 2. The picture was distinctly out of focus; 3. Their Majesties seemed stiff and tired. But as with the colour experiment a later attempt met with striking success.

At the Derby, the giant lens was trained on the Royal Box from the opposite side of the course. And this time : 1. A new tripod took care of the wobble; 2 A new cameraman took care of the focus ; 3. The race took care of Their Majesties. As the horses thundered down from Tattenham Corner, the camera caught every detail of the mounting Royal excitement—the glasses up, then hurriedly dropped as the field closed in—the breath held for the last few seconds—the quick look at the race card—and the smiling "we've lost!" At every showing of the Pathé Derby story, those shots lifted the audience out of its seat. A final answer to the critics who suggested that these super lenses were only good for publicity stories. Moral: Giant lenses are superb for catching the great in unguarded moments, but the shots must be edited with understanding to avoid pictorial cruelty. Fly in the ointment: Because the giant lens at the Derby occupied a rota position (see *W.F.N.* for June), Pathé had to send a copy of the Royal close-ups to Movietone. Pathé ordered and paid for the lens—Movietone get the pictures.

Disaster in 32 seconds

The pictures of the flaming "Hindenburg" will go down to newsreel history. They were shown at the official enquiry to clear up the mystery cause of the explosion. They revealed the staggering fact, that from the first burst of flame from the airship's tail to the final flicker of the fire licking the twisted ruin, only 32 seconds elapsed!

None of the five cameramen present caught the first explosion. Reason: A few years ago, when the "Akron" was landing, a sudden gust of wind swept the ship suddenly upwards with three men dangling from the mooring ropes. Two of them were killed. Foreseeing a repetition, all five cameramen had panned to the ground, as soon as the "Hindenburg" had dropped her lines. Hardly less thrilling than the picture of the flaming ship, were: 1. the half crazed yells of the cameramen to "swing over . . . look . . . for ***** sake shoot" when they realised what had happened; 2. the shakiness of the pictures, as the cameramen literally trembled with horror.

LETTERS

SCRAP-HEAP TEACHING FILMS

Mr. Ferguson's interesting article in your May issue on the appalling waste of valuable material from the super films will be appreciated by most teachers. There are, however, as he points out, welcome signs that the companies are preparing to collaborate with the schools, in some cases at least. Teachers who read your paper may be interested to know that The Dartington Hall Film Unit, in collaboration with Kino Films, is using material from Turin's *Turksib* to make a children's film on pastoral nomadism. This will be available in the autumn at latest, and those who remember the silent masterpiece will not need to be told how valuable the material in it is. The film will contrast the landscapes and ways of living in the lands of settled people with those of the steppe, desert, and semi-desert. The dependence of the nomads on their flocks and herds will be shown, the packing up of their villages, the move from one region of grass to another across the desert, the desert hardships, and the arrival to fertile lands on the other side of the desert. The film, which will be 16 mm. size, will run for about 13 minutes.

Yours sincerely,

WILLIAM HUNTER (*Film Officer*),
Dartington Hall, Totnes.

Mr. Russell Ferguson raised an interesting point in his article in the May issue of WORLD FILM NEWS. In the production of histories and biographies, newsreels and drama, the film companies include many pieces of film which would be valuable to teachers. Cannot some way be found of collecting such pieces of film after the theatrical distribution of the features themselves, and of editing them into films for use in our schools? Mr. Ferguson went so far as to propose an organisation for the provision of this service, and put forward some valuable and constructive suggestions for its institution.

But is there this need? It is true that there is the demand but is this demand based upon experience of existing films, and knowledge alike of the film medium and of the teacher's job?

What is the real function of an instructional film? To show those things which the teacher cannot illustrate as well by any other means. What is to be the function of these proposed films? To show the "settings, the sea and the ships, and the rigging . . . the costumes, the uniforms, weapons, furniture . . . the jug and bottle, window and table, stomacher and kirtle . . . street scenes, prairies, seascapes, interiors, theatres, old houses, etc., etc."—all more or less static objects better and more conveniently illustrated by means of the still-film, the lantern slide, and the picture.

The trouble is this. It is agreed that the teacher does not want Charles Laughton's *Henry VIII*, or Jackie Cooper's *Jim Hawkins*. In fact, the teacher does not want the persons at all for these are seldom like the people of the times. Besides, he cannot show a film actor on the classroom screen, not even the man who merely has to say, "You rang, my lord?" because his pupils will have seen the same man the night before in some gangster film shouting, "Say Boss! Shall I give him de woiks?" And if we are to cut out people from these feature films, we shall be left only with the static objects, the material of the still media.

And are the settings accurate? The studio artists travel all over the world gathering knowledge and material for their films, they ship back load upon load of period furniture, they spare neither time nor money in their search for authenticity. They prepare their sketches for the construction of the sets after consulting old prints and paintings, only deviating from accuracy to put in little artistic touches of their own. Then they submit these sketches to a conference of producer, director, technicians, etc. Each will have some little alteration to make—it will be difficult to light unless . . . it's not what the public expects in films of this kind . . . those arches will kill all the sound . . . etc.—and the finished plans will be fortunate if they bear any resemblance to the preliminary sketches. Mr. Ferguson mentioned Vincent Korda's Tudor interiors, but I have seen Vincent Korda's preliminary sketch of a scene which was translated in the film *Henry VIII* from the Gothic to a combination of Roman pillars and an arch such as has never been seen throughout the history of architecture. And look at *Romeo and Juliet*.

Experience has shown that the functions of the film in history teaching will be in the illustration of old customs in terms of their present-day survivals, in the animation of maps and statistical symbols, in the presentation of such ideas as progress and evolution and accumulation, and in the concentration of facts for revision. I will go so far with Mr. Ferguson—that, if there is a need of such films as he demands, then that need must be met along lines such as he proposed. But I am not convinced that there is need of these aims. I have changed my ideas during the last twelve months—a year ago I was advocating as Dr. Rusk and Mr. Ferguson are to-day—and perhaps I will change them again. But it does seem to me that teaching films must be conceived as such and made as such and not constructed from material gathered for some other, and very different, purpose.

Guides to Films

This is not to say that the teacher cannot derive any assistance from the theatrical film. The recent issue of *Sight and Sound* contained the story of a teacher who complained that he had found it necessary to eradicate all the ideas conveyed to the children by *The Private Life of Henry VIII* before attempting to teach any historical facts about the period. This should not be so. It should be possible, if the teacher will go to the trouble of studying an historical film before it reaches the cinemas in the neighbourhood of the school, to make good use of its material as a basis for instruction and discussion. The teacher would be greatly helped in this direction if he were able to obtain guides to the films on the lines of those published by Educational and Recreational Guides, Inc., of Newark, New Jersey. The British Film Institute is obviously endeavouring to provide something of the sort in arranging, in conjunction with the Historical Association, for future historical films to be reviewed by a panel of eminent historians. The first review of this kind, that of *Fire Over England*, will be published in *The Schoolmaster* towards the end of August so that teachers may see it before the film is released.

Such a scheme could easily be extended to embrace films other than histories and biographies, and might be made a self-supporting concern as it is in America.

G. BUCKLAND SMITH

The Human Factor

The great stumbling block in all forms of artistic production, has always been and always will be, the human factor. Whether it is in the case of ballet and opera, or in theatre and cinema, the problem is the same. Will the film producer or director be up against it eternally?

It is not the great technician or the man with

QUACK! QUACK!

Just as a quack dentist can make a fearful mess of your mouth so can a quack studio make a shocking mess of your film.

We started recording when recording first started and we learned that recording, to standards demanded to-day, cannot be done with a box of wheels, a few yards of wire, a ball of string and a heap of luck.

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If you want quack results you don't want us, but if you demand a really high standard and professional treatment go to

IMPERIAL SOUND STUDIOS
84 Wardour Street, W.1 *Ger.* 1963
THE RECORDING SPECIALISTS

LETTERS

an immense intellectual understanding of his particular medium who will produce important artistic creations—and artistic creations which have only a limited appeal are not important to the world (although they may be valuable to other artists)—but the man who understands other men; and recognises that his relationship with his collaborators is just as important and vital as his actual knowledge and feeling for his craft.

It is men like Diaghileff who make great ballet through their understanding of other men; or St. Denis, who built up the Compagnie des Quinze, who makes great theatrical productions. But where is such a leader of a group in films. Perhaps he will spring up in this country out of the Documentary group, when they develop more feeling and less technique; or in the Soviet Union, when politics and social considerations are not so vital; or in the United States, should the star system ever weaken. But wherever he does spring up and whoever this leader is, he will be a man who understands the human needs of other men, and who understands that productions must be balanced and that brilliance in any one particular direction is valueless.

All the component parts must be balanced. Brilliant camerawork on bad actors, is as valueless as fine acting on an unlit set, or clean recording accompanying a bumpy camera truck. Just as actors trained in different schools of acting will never be able to fit in with each other, your art directors and musical composers will never be of value to the film director until they can learn to subordinate their art to the art of film making.

Michel St. Denis, who is building up a theatre group in this country, has important things to say about stage producers, and we may make valuable use of what he says by applying his ideas to film production. "The theatre requires flesh and blood material, not intellectual invention," he says. "The man who will create great drama is the man who feels physical life, who can experience the feelings which the actor is to portray. He must give the people working under him the feeling of freedom—freedom to invent by themselves. He must understand the language and the slang of his electricians and carpenters, and share the anxieties of all working on the production. He must not sit behind a large desk remote from the production. These things are far more important than conceptions, however great the conceptions may be."

Armchair arguments are valueless, because they fail to allow for the human factor. We sit and sip our coffee and say: That would make a good shot. This would be a brilliant cut. And if we recorded something like this the film will be "a riot" No. Never. Few films will ever be "riots," or world successes until the human factor is more carefully considered.

HAROLD LOWENSTEIN

Coronation Newsreels

I read in your very interesting journal for the current month the "Diary of the Coronation Reels," and at the risk of spoiling a good story, here are the facts.

Special negative film stock used for taking the scenes inside Westminster Abbey on Coronation Day did not come in any "specially sealed package from America" a day or two before the Coronation. As a matter of fact, for some weeks before the Coronation date experiments were made in the Research Laboratories of Kodak Ltd., at Wealdstone, Middlesex, with a view to hyper-sensitising negative film for this event, and although originally it looked as if the speed of the negative film could not be boosted up sufficiently to give a well-exposed picture, further research showed that it was possible. This fact was known several days before the actual Coronation ceremony to all concerned.

I am sure you will agree that credit should certainly be given where it is due, namely, to the Research chemists and technical staff of Kodak, Ltd., London.

E. E. BLAKE, *Managing Director, Kodak Ltd.*

What foreign correspondents say about the Coronation Newsreels

Warsaw: Only a fifteen minute reel, which was "badly produced and gave a very poor impression of the events of the day."

San Palo (Brazil): Fox reels arrived July 4th by Air France. Shown at four cinemas in the town, and enthusiastically received. Interesting to note that no Jubilee reels ever reached here.

Vienna: Paramount reels were shown, and appreciated pictorially. But the sound —i.e. the Abbey service—was a tremendous disappointment, after hearing it on the wireless. The films lacked unity, and dwelt far too much on the King, the Queen and the Procession. There should have been more human interest, more signs of jubilation in the streets.

Moonlight Sonata

United Artists present a Pall Mall Production *Moonlight Sonata*, featuring Ignace Jan Paderewski, a piano and an architecturally incredible concert-hall. Mr. Lothar Mendes, a director whose promise in *Payment Deferred* was obscured in *The Man Who Could Work Miracles* by the cavortings of the special effects department, appears here as a man without the artist's eye for a scene or an image. Incredible though it may seem, the first twenty-minutes of this picture contain no dialogue and no natural sound, only the post-recorded piano music. This becomes a fault when, as here, there is no visual development of story, emotion, atmosphere or even incident. The first mobility of action comes when the director decides to photograph the reaction of a small child to the maestro's playing. This is done for all the world to see by waving a handkerchief in the poor mite's face, the typically bored, reflex-action smile that could not possibly be inspired by even the Hungarian Rhapsody being the result.

After this curtain-raising musical interlude, Paderewski remarks to some adoring club members "Sometimes, when the circumstances and the audience are right, when you can work on the emotions—then comes the miracle." But Mr. Mendes and his cameraman must have been out having one when this line was recorded, for they ignore its advice, and are far more interested in shooting from underneath the piano than in making pictures that "work on the emotions." The miracle is that there manages to emerge from this morass of production faults and wasted opportunities a sense of wonder at this toothless, wrinkled veteran who is still so young in his hands and his heart. The trade-show audience applauded dutifully each routine portion of genius as it was doled out, but they should have been hissing these monied charlatans who call themselves film makers.

What might a film artist have done, once this superb artist in music had signed on the dotted line! Has it occured to Pall Mall Productions that Paderewski was once prime minister of Poland? That the melody of his music should be moulded as an epic undertone to the strife of his life? Here we could have created an autobiography, real and tremendous, a new kind of film even. And what do we find? Expensive photography that often consists of frame succeeding frame with not an object in focus. Not so much as the smell of a story idea, merely the old, old distinguished-visitor-comes-to-change-my-life strip-tease. Inferior, unnatural lighting, and not one single fragment of film acting, save from stage-actor Eric Portman. Nero fiddled while Rome burned, and Paderewski plays while Beethoven is murdered by a man with a megaphone and a turtle-neck sweater. Ars Gratia United Artists!

RODERIC PAPINEAU.

Book Review

HANDBOOK OF THE TELEVISION EXHIBITION AT THE SCIENCE MUSEUM (H.M. Stationery Office, 6d.)

Television is on show at the Science Museum. To stimulate interest and provide information, an exhibition ranging from the earliest apparatus to the latest large-screen process has been staged at South Kensington. It was opened on June 11th and will continue till September.

For many the opportunities of inspecting what television can and cannot do are still few and far between. Crowded demonstrations at chain stores, railway termini and the like give only an incomplete impression and afford no basis for judgment. At this exhibition the prospective buyer can make a closer investigation of the new medium and the student can see it in its historical perspective.

A sixpenny pamphlet bearing the imprimatur of the Board of Education and the Science Museum has been issued in connection with the Exhibition. It is an authoritative exposition, in lucid and non-technical language, of the apparatus necessary for television transmission and reception. Each piece of apparatus described is accompanied by an outline of its development from early experiments. In this way, the authors will prove their point that television has not, as is often believed, resulted from concentrated research during the past ten years, but has quietly evolved from the enthusiastic though sometimes impracticable proposals of nineteenth-century scientists.

A copious bibliography ranging from semi-popular books and articles to the papers of learned societies accompanies each chapter, while not the least useful feature is a map showing the field-strengths of the Alexandra Palace signal at different points throughout greater London.

The pamphlet provides a solid, if unimaginative foundation of information and opens up a rich field of further reference. S.L.

Lines to a Half-starved Star

Dr. H. W. Taylor, Vice-Chairman of Bolton's Public Libraries Committee, likes film actresses who are real women.

"Women in British films," he said, "are all thin-lipped, all about two nutmegs in weight and appear to be of the same age—from 14 to 17." He added gloomily: "We have no real women like those we see in industrial towns like Bolton."—*News Item.*

O, throw away the load of Hay*
That constitutes your diet;
Get down to steaks and creamy cakes
And let your waists run riot.
Go feed on chocs until your frocks
Relieve themselves of buttons;
Just try, my dear,
That French idea—
Returning to your muttons.

If you're thin-lipped and cobra-hipped
And girlish in appearance,
A busy spoon will pretty soon
Reduce the old ground-clearance.
Just set about a quart of stout
And oysters—nothing flimsy—
Once that's inside how you'll deride
That bit of nutmeg whimsy.

O, turn not back though friends may crack
About the fat-stock prices;
Go on and seize such groceries
As candies, cakes and ices.
Just help along your *on bon pong*,†
Make no attempt to hide it;
Though Time may march
Just take your starch
And string along beside it.

Though critics scream at your régime
When eating—don't you break it;
With two more stones around your bones
I guess that you can take it.
You'll soon begin to wear a chin
That you can take a jolt on—
You'll be cold meat to Wardour Street
But boy! how sweet to Bolton.

*Doctor, not Will.
†*En bon point* to you, Mr. Goldwyn.

Snooks Grieser, W.F.N.'s disgusting lift-boy, took Freddie Bartholomew for a ride the other day.

Snooks "So you're the guy that Greta Garbo kissed in *Anna Karenina*, hey?"

Freddie "Oh, yes. Rather. Jolly good I thought."

Snooks "And what's your reaction to that dame?"

Freddie "Oh, she's quite a nice girl but ticklish."

Snooks "Just an iconoclast, eh? Take that and that and that! Third floor, bandages, baby-linen, sissy velvet-suits with lace trimmings and *World Film News*."

AMAZING REVELATIONS

W.F.N. Exposes New Studio Horror

There are many lessons to be learned, I always think, from the advertisement columns of our Great British Press. (You know which are the advertisement columns, don't you, Aubrey? They're the ones about B.O. and we don't mean Box Office.)

For instance, what could turn a more revealing light on the conditions existing in the Film Industry to-day than this little slice of life, culled with infinite care, as one would extract a lump of kidney from a steak-and-kidney pie, from an advertisement for a face-cream?

It is headed, simply but incisively: "At the Film Studio." It reads thus:

Leading Actor: What a lovely creature Vera is. I have never seen such a beautiful girl in a film studio before.

Actress friend: I know her very well. She has wonderful brains and personality, but she could never get leading parts in films before because her complexion was so bad. Three months ago she started using that wonderful . . . . etc., etc., etc.

I do not think it would be very difficult for readers with the kind of mind I know you to possess, to picture the kind of treatment poor Vera had to endure before she saw the light. Something like this:

(*The scene is the Casting Director's office. The Casting Director, Mr. Finestein, is sitting at his desk, cutting up pages of the* WORLD FILM NEWS *into the shape of swastikas. He seems unconscious of the beautiful woman standing before him. But then, Mr. Finestein always looks unconscious. Need we say that the beautiful woman is Vera?*)

Vera: But Mr. Finestein, I have brains; I have personality.

Finestein (*with old-world courtesy*): You've also got enlarged pores, lady.

Vera: But I'm educated. I've read Dumas.

Finestein: I'm not interested in the colour of your clothing.

Vera: Don't you see, Mr. Finestein, I got culture. I could knock that Garbo for a row of ashcans any time you please.

Finestein: Not with that wart on your nose, you couldn't.

Vera: You seem to forget I matriculated!

Finestein: Listen, baby, contortions don't get a goil nowhere. Not if she's got a sallow skin, they don't.

Vera: See here, stupid. I gotta head on my shoulders.

Finestein: Sure. A blackhead. But if ever we want a bearded lady, I'll bear you in mind. And now scram, will ya? You're giving me spots before the eyes.

Hurt, angry, flushing hotly through her freckles, Vera sweeps out of the room. But in three months she is back, smooth-skinned, radiantly lovely. She has exchanged a blotchy skin for a career on the films. She would have done better to have stuck to her blotchy skin.

COCKA

By Rodney

FOR ADULTS ONLY

"In private life he lives simply. His normal diet is plain dog biscuits garnished with gravy. Occasional dishes of raw or cooked meat are approved, but what gives him the greatest possible pleasure is a nice piece of liver."—*News Item.*

Guess what film star that little morsel refers to, my pretties. Clark Gable? No.

British Exhibitor Faces up to American Film Salesman

LORUM

Hobson

Fred Astaire? As if! John Barrymore? How *could* you! Fred MacMurray? Well, *reelly!*

It sound like it refers to a dog, doesn't it? Well, it does refer to a dog. The dog is called "Scruffy," and it acts in films. Human actors, of course, act in films and are called lousy. Scruffy has his nice piece of liver handed to him. Film actors have to do a lot of hard drinking to get their livers. Which only goes to show.

Tell your Kiddies then Run Like Mad

In spite of enormous expense and spirited opposition from the man from whom we pinched the original idea, *W.F.N.* will begin publication next month of a new comic-strip.

It is called "Alex, Issy and Little Audrey" and it tells of the adventures of these three little madcaps in a series of fat-headed situations. You'll laugh your fool heads off.

What is the secret of Alex's Inexhaustible Purse? Ah, we're not telling. We don't know ourselves. And how did Issy escape from The Castle That Nobody Loves at Shepherd's Bush? Don't ask silly questions.

And who is the mysterious figure, "La Belle Lejeune," who lives in an enchanted grotto at Tulse Hill and thrashes about like a mad thing throughout the entire series? Aren't we being *maddening!*

Be sure you get somebody else's copy next month. A free pattern of a horse's nose-bag with every one. The month after that we are giving away a free pattern of a horse.

Music Lovers' Corner—
Conducted by Uncle Oboe

I am a composer and do most of my composing on tablecloths. Can you tell me which knife I should use for the purpose of sharpening my pencil? Friends notice my confusion and laugh at me. Can you help me?

B.F.

If you compose sea-shanties, you should, of course, use a fish knife. For Viennese waltzes, the pencil should be sharpened with a soup spoon. For sonatas, use a fruit knife. For your friends, use a blunt axe. You *must* let me see your compositions some time.

* * *

Can you advise me what to do with the rear half of my piano-stool? I find this portion gets very little wear as I always adopt the forward seat, except for very rough going such as Stravinsky. I hate to see so much good piano-stool going to waste.

CURIOUS.

I believe that this problem is much more common than most people imagine and I admire your courage in voicing it. Dotti, the Armenian virtuoso, overcame the difficulty by having his two young nieces occupy the waste space. Elsie Stubbs, the Dagenham Girl-Wonder, used to fill it up with a specially built bustle containing sandwiches and a flask of cocoa; while Drool, the Russian, used the rear portion of his stool as a bed for vegetable marrows. Sir Thomas Beecham wears one of these marrows on his watch-chain to this day.

Your best solution, however, is this: sometime, when you have a couple of days to spare, push the piano round to the other side of the stool. In no time at all, the stool will be worn evenly all round and it will then be time for you to think up some other fool question to ask me, you big morbid thing. You ought to try going out more and meeting people.

* * *

What is the best way to distemper a harp?

R.H.

Get an old trumpet and fill it with distemper. Apply the mouth to the wrong end and the fluid can then be blown in a thin stream on to any portion of the harp. By pressing the stops of the trumpet at random an effective stipple effect and a lot of quiet fun can be obtained. The harp strings can be cleaned afterwards with a small file.

* * *

Is there any method of utilising the exhaust fumes from a trombone?

PRO TROMBONO PUBLICO.

Yes, there is. A Mr. George Teak of Pontefract has perfected a device known as the Teak Non-Return Trombone Duct which, in the words of the inventor, "puts this vital force to work."

The principle is this: the trombone is "tubed," in the same way as broken-winded horses, and the vapour is led off in a small rubber pipe, which is carried over the blind-side ear of the player, into a separator where it is washed and dried. After that it is pumped into the heating system of the concert hall or theatre, or else led away by pipe-line and used for cleaning conservatories. It has been computed that one performance of *Il Pagliacci* would supply enough vapour to heat an average sized flat until it is well-nigh unbearable.

* * *

Who was the first man to play swing music on a spinet?

ANXIOUS.

A Mr. Edgar Toop of Thirsk, on the occasion of the first jam-session organised by Charlotte Brontë. And did that baby go to town!

* * *

My clarinet gets full of bread crumbs when I play after tea. What do you suggest?

MADCAP MOLLY.

Eat cake.

What did you do, Daddy, in the great Harrogate Conference?

Quip Tease Corner

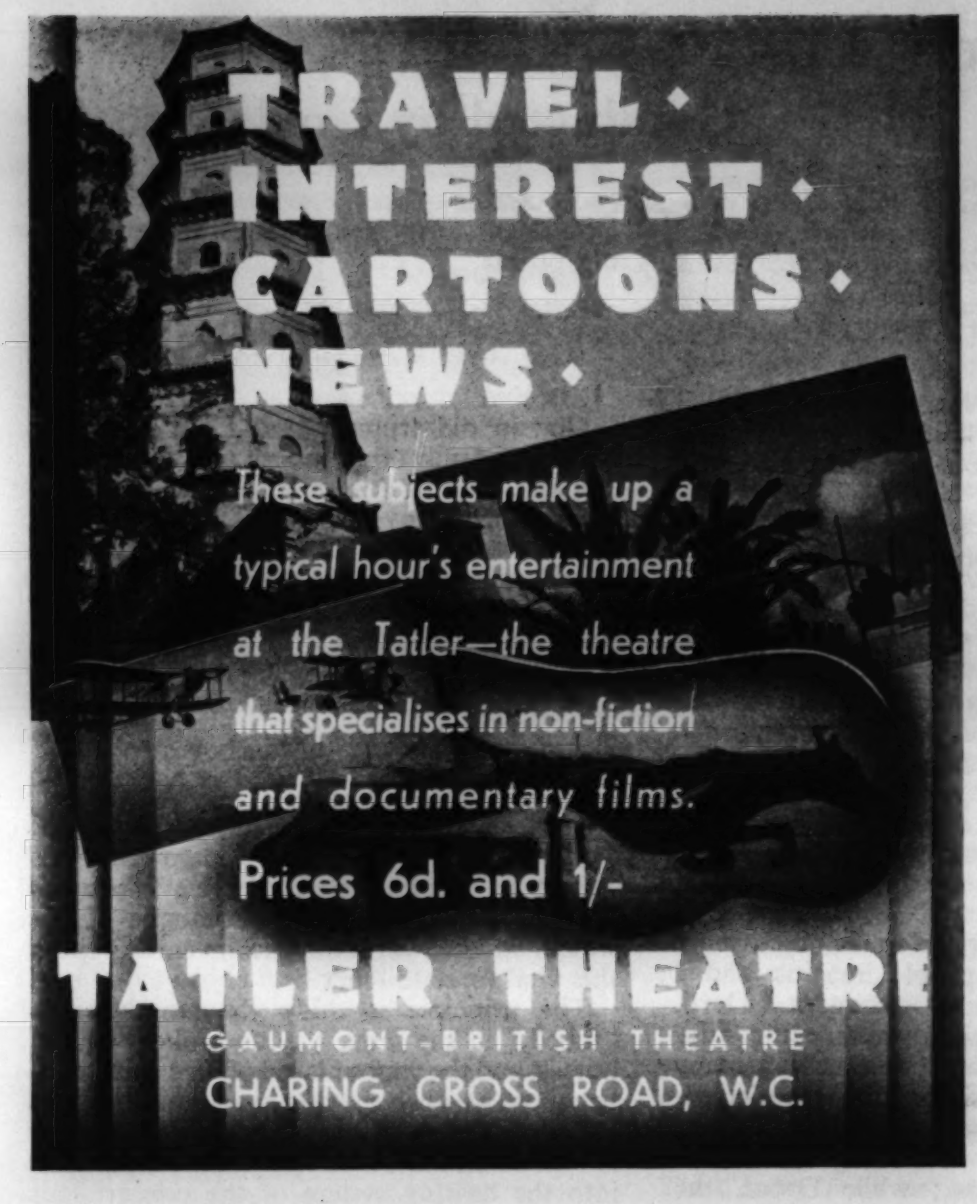
"Gonged but not forgotten," as the film-star said after being stopped for speeding.

* * *

"St. Pancras Station is the thief of time," as the reporter said, waiting in the bar for the Foreign Star to arrive.

* * *

"Now the fat *is* in the foyer," as the cinema-manager said when the Mayoress arrived for the Charity performance.



Some of the subjects :

The Film as entertainment, as art, as publicity, as propaganda, as education

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Movie History and movie progress

Advice to Amateur Film-makers

World opinion and events

etc., etc.

APRIL 1936 to MARCH 1937

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SPRING 1937
SIXPENCE

THE FILM QUARTERLY **64 PAGES** **FULLY ILLUSTRATED**

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Citizens of Paris Make a Film

By MARIE SETON

THE French cinema industry is astonished, and not a little disgruntled, at the gigantic project which the Popular Front film organisation, Ciné-Liberté, is undertaking—the production of the French Revolution film, the *Marsellaise*. The methods which Ciné-Liberté is adopting in order to finance and produce this film are unique in the history of the cinema for the "backers" and most of the actors are the Paris populace themselves. With the assistance of the Trades Unions, who have 5½ million members, many mass meetings are being organised where 2-franc shares are sold in order to defray the £50,000 production cost. The Trades Unions have already bought 50,000 francs worth of shares, while the Government has lent its moral support. There is a joke going round Paris to the effect that should there arise a hitch and the services of the regular Army are not forthcoming for the film's battle sequence, then several factories will proclaim a strike, and the men, most of whom have done their military service, will impersonate the victorious Republican Army who routed the Prussian interventionists.

Renoir produces

Jean Renoir, the son of the painter, is in charge of the production. Among his recent films are an adaptation of Maxim Gorky's story, *Les Bas-Fonds*, due to be shown at the Curzon Cinema, London, shortly; *La Grande Illusion*, a story of German prison camps during the war, and the election film, *La Vie est a Nous*, sponsored by the French Communist Party and recently shown at the London Film Society. He is at present writing the scenario of the *Marseillaise* in conjunction with four other directors of production: Germaine Dulac, the well-known woman director, Jean-Paul Dreyfus of Ciné-Liberté, Andre Zwobada and Louis Joly, a representative of the Paris workers. This "collective" is in contact with historians, designers, musicians and technical advisers. The dialogue for different sequences will be written by various well-known writers. For example, a discussion between Robespierre and Bressot on the conflicting ideas of Revolution at that period is being reconstructed by Marcel Pagnol the playwright and film director from historical records of their various statements. Henri Jeanson one of the leading dialogue writers in France is responsible for the Parisienne workers sequences. Lenormond and other writers will work on further sections. The film will probably appear in September.

Maurice Chevalier to play

Two of the leading parts will be played by Maurice Chevalier and Jean Gabin; while Renoir has the original idea of trying to have the smaller parts acted by the descendants of people who took an active part in the Revolution. The scenarists have decided that since the commercial cinema has made many spectacular films of the French Revolution, and have laid particular emphasis upon the storming of the Bastille, the *Marseillaise* will open after this event and that the Revolution in all its phases shall be seen through the eyes of the man in the street.

The film opens in a village some distance from Paris in July, 1789. The life of the villagers is shown and contrasted with the luxurious living of the local chatelain. There is a brooding restlessness and discontent among the peasantry. They are beginning to strain against the remnants of the feudal system which hedges them around. There is one peasant who says little but thinks the more (Jean Gabin). Suddenly the village is thrown into a turmoil by the news that the Bastille has been stormed by the Paris workers. The long-smouldering resentment of the peasants flares up against their masters; if the townsmen can make a successful revolt so can the countrymen. The peasantry storm the castle.

Coachman's story

The story moves to Versailles where the plans of Louis XVI to escape from France are seen through the eyes of one of his coachmen. The women of Paris march upon the Palace and finally the King is arrested. His arrest has an electric effect upon the populace. The traditional veneration and respect of the Monarch is suddenly broken and as he is escorted back to Paris not a single man in the crowd bares his head.

The next sequence shows the different Courts of Europe and their reaction to the execution of the King of France. His death is a threat to their own security. Emigrés are flocking to England, Germany and other Courts seeking assistance against the Revolution which has turned them out of power. Everywhere there are preparations for intervention. Back in Paris the revolutionaries are in the throes of discussion. Clubs have been formed where the workers of varying shades of political opinion express their views. Here the contending ideas of Robespierre (shown as the Stalin of the time) and Bressot (the Trotsky of his day) are thrashed out. It is clear that the Clubs of the French revolutionaries correspond to the political parties in France to-day.

At last the clash of interests is settled in battle. France is invaded by the Prussian Army in which 50,000 emigrés are fighting. On the Republican side there are foreigners who wish to die for the new Republic. They are the eighteenth-century International Column. After a terrific battle victory goes to the ragged untrained Republican army. When Goethe hears the news he exlaims: "There is something new under the sun." The *Marseillaise* has a Left political twist which aims at making it a very topical history.

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of affairs when German-speaking films must inevitably be subservient to the German market. While the Czecho-Slovakian film industry is supported by the state, in that all productions are given a 25 per cent state credit, it is unlikely that the Austrian film industry will receive similar support.

Austria Appeals for State Support

By L. PERKOFF

The crisis in the Austrian film industry was recently voiced by Dr. Paul, one of the heads of the industry, in an impassioned S.O.S. and appeal for state support, namely, a 10 per cent state credit on each film produced. Despite the clear statement on the present catastrophic state of the industry, Dr. Paul's analysis did not touch on the fundamental issues that are the main cause of this dead end.

Since Austria with its relatively small population of six million people cannot hope to produce films for its own consumption solely, it must of necessity keep its eye on the German market. Thus it has become subservient to German producers and capital. The possibility of smooth-running production on this basis has proved unworkable. Firstly by the official government fear of an *Anschluss* with Germany, which expresses itself in the not infrequent banning of German films with strong Nazi propaganda, and then by the introduction of the Goebbels Aryan paragraph which has excluded many non-Aryan film craftsmen and actors from most films made in Austria which have German interests. (Those few Austrian companies with production units in Vienna that might wish to employ non-Aryan labour on account of merit alone, are willy-nilly forced to adopt a 100 per cent Aryan policy in order to cater for the German market. Thus the boycott is unofficial and very little advertised.)

Non-aryans excluded

It is almost an impossibility for anyone who is not "pure" Aryan according to the Goebbels doctrine of racial purity to obtain employment in Austrian studios. To achieve this complete boycott the *Reichsfilmkammer* in Berlin use their own specific methods of intimidation and spying. Two Austrians are employed to scrutinise the racial origin of all film workers. These men, Messers Zoidl and Rossi, are in constant touch with the *Reichsfilmkammer* in Germany and inform this body if a Jew or anyone partly Jewish is being employed in an Austrian film. In the circumstances that particular film would be banned in Germany, a predicament which Austrian film units could not afford.

In the last year, of the 343 films that were presented in Austria, 155 were American, 112 German and only 21 Austrian. Nevertheless 3,000 people were employed in the Austrian film industry in the last year. The present year offers no such prospects, for the crisis that arose between Germany and Austria has been active for the last six months and has reached no satisfactory solution. The intervals between the production of films in Austria grows longer and longer, until now a comparative state of zero has been reached.

The only substantial company in Austria with possibilities of taking an independent line, however limited that may be, is the Tobis-Sascha Company. This is due mainly to the fact that 50 per cent of its interests are Austrian. But it is unlikely that financial support from private sources will be forthcoming in the present state

(*Continued in previous column*)

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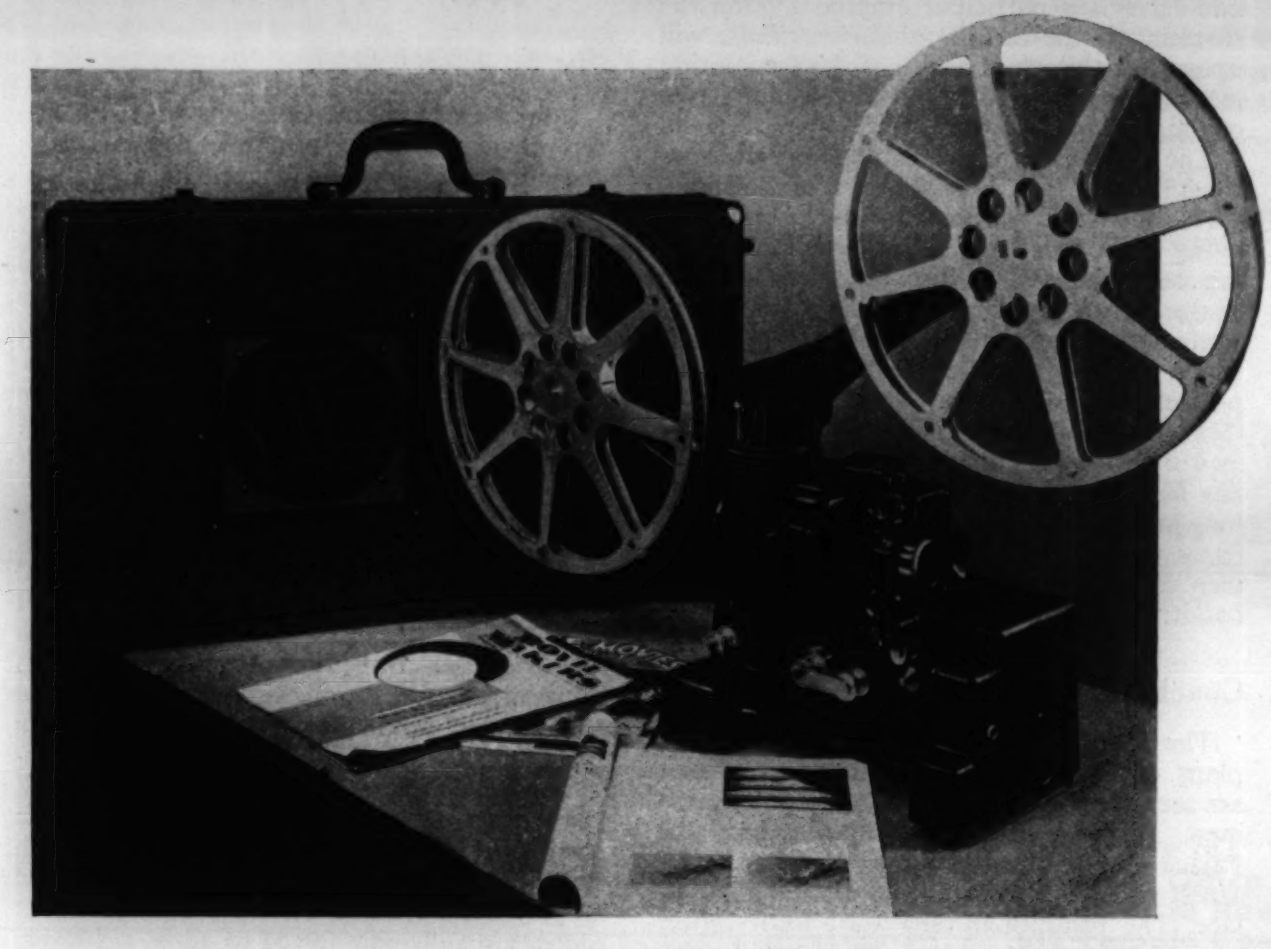

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PRICES ON APPLICATION

PEOPLE WITH PURPOSES

Preaching to the Converted

by E. Billock

RECENTLY there has been a pronounced tendency among the makers of documentary film to attempt no longer to distribute them through the usual channels, i.e. the ordinary cinemas. They are now concentrating on what they call the "non-theatrical field," or in other words, free shows to anybody throughout the country who will guarantee an audience.

Formally, the majority of documentary films had a fairly extensive showing in cinemas. The Industrial Britain series of the Empire Marketing Board was distributed by Gaumont. New Era and later A.B.F.D. put out many of the early Post Office shorts. But since *Night Mail*, no Post Office films have been seen in the cinemas, and I now understand that *Night Mail* has been withdrawn for the non-theatrical side. Surely, if the maximum publicity and propaganda value is to be obtained from these films, this is a mistaken policy?

The ideology of documentalists, as propounded by Mr. John Grierson, is civic education. They talk of horizons having widened and viewpoints becoming specialised. They hope by dramatising the citizen in his job and his home, to make him realise his responsibilities to the community. They hope to make citizenship exciting. All very praiseworthy and ambitious. And to bring this about they lump their films together and show them to Y.M.C.A.'s, church groups, debating societies, and so on throughout the country. Of course, it is admitted that, at the same time, many schools are served. This is wholly admirable and immensely worth while; but it is the adult non-theatrical showings that seem to be a waste of time. For several reasons.

Free Shows—suspect

Firstly, the groups to which the films are shown, as typified above (the examples given may be rather narrow), are usually gatherings of people who are, and have been, much more inclined to realise their responsibilities to the community than the ordinary man in the street. The very fact that they belong to such bodies, surely means that they realise the value of organising together, to act or think. In fact, in many instances, it is a case of converting the already converted. Again, if the showing is one to which the general public can go—a free show—it is almost always suspect.

In a capitalistic community, where even charity is merely a bait for a knighthood or a short-cut to Heaven, anything free is felt to have a catch in it somewhere. And so the free films are never really appreciated. They may be "very nice" or "very interesting," but they are promptly forgotten. But if the documentary film is seen in a cinema by people who have paid their hard-earned money to get in, this "dramatisation of actuality," sandwiched between synthesism, will become memorable. It is surely here that converts will be made. There will be no suspicion from the audience. No feeling that they are being educated or lectured. And the psychological result will be that the film's moral will be appreciated a hundred per cent. more than at the free show.

Ceremonial belly-crawl

It may be said that it is the renters who have forced the documentary film-makers into the non-theatrical field. That to get the pontifical gentlemen who "know what the public wants" to accept a documentary film at all, the makers have to perform a ceremonial belly-crawl down Wardour Street. But surely not now? Documentary is strong and growing every day. It has obtained a vast amount of publicity over the last years. Its leaders are known and respected. To an outsider, it would appear almost like running away just as the fight is won to suddenly go over to the "free-show". It is such an easy way to get your audience. And the documentary film group that has risen in Britain is so much superior to the type of film show at which you get a free sample as you go out.

If the new quota act is going to make a larger allowance for British shorts, surely our documentalists are going to take advantage of it? If they keep at it we may yet see the day when realist films will be as usual and as acceptable in our cinemas as newsreels are at present. Then, and only then, will they reach the really representative body of the people.

SHORT FILMS REVIEWED

KEW GARDENS, a Short Film Production, produced by Harold Lowenstein, directed by Philip Leacock, photography by Vivian Braun.

This film has the great merit of being completely unpretentious and presenting its subject-matter in a simple and exceedingly agreeable manner. The general scenes of the Garden show a sense of observation and humour, and the close-up photography of the plants is satisfactorily lucid. Considering that the various activities at Kew are all mentioned, including the more scientific work, the film succeeds in getting a great deal of information across, although much of it is bound to be superficial. It does, however, represent a very excellent type of short for almost any audience, and may be regarded as having some educational value, outside the cinema, as well.

Some of the commentary is rather too flowery in its phraseology, and there is one bad mistake, where an orgy of menacing music accompanies a truck shot through the central-heating plant; this merely creates a mock melodrama and detracts from the clarity of the rest of the film.

C.M.

"We Live in Two Worlds"

WE LIVE IN TWO WORLDS

This is one of the major productions of the G.P.O. Film Unit and is a direct descendant of such films as *Night Mail*. The most gratifying thing to note in this type of film is not merely the facilities which the G.P.O. Film Unit gives for maturing a subject over a period, but also the fact that in telling the story of modern communications the makers of the film have also been allowed to present, not merely in intellectual but in dramatically moving terms, the idea of internationalism.

The film is credited as "A film talk by J. B. Priestley." It is certainly this, but it is also something more. It is the first purely individual production of Cavalcanti since he joined the docu-

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People with Purposes (cont.)

mentary film movement in England, and as such is a personal triumph. With Grierson as producer he has been completely successful in co-ordinating the talents of Priestley as writer and talker, and of Jaubert, as undoubtedly the finest musician writing for the screen to-day.

The film is simple in shape. Beginning with straight shots of Priestley (whom some may feel to be a not entirely sympathetic screen character) it passes to the picture of a Switzerland rich in tradition and hemmed in not merely by natural barriers, but by the artificial barriers of customs and tariffs and the armed force which lies behind them. A rocket carrying a telephone wire across a mountain gorge signals the other and more important world—the international world; the map of Europe is no longer in frontiers but in lines of communication: road, rail, air, telephone and wireless. In this frame Switzerland appears very differently, as a country of manufacture and travel and tourism, and as a supplier of electric power to Europe. At this point the film might very well have ended had not the director succeeded in bringing off an extremely difficult sequence with complete triumph—a sequence mysteriously presented, but quite movingly and simply stating the idea of internationalism and carrying us up into a night sky with this idea; the measure of its success is that the night sky does not leave us in the air.

Jaubert's Music

The technical qualities of the film are probably the best the G.P.O. has yet given us. The pulse of Jaubert's music runs magnificently through every sequence. The photography is excellent and the editing a genuine re-establishment of the value of smoothly-moving visuals.

The main points of criticism may be said to be, first, that Priestley himself tends to be somewhat too heavy and downright; and second, that the ideological point of change from the national to the international world should surely have been emphasised much more; the rocket signals it, but the subsequent statement is underplayed, and may for this reason cause some slight confusion in the mind of an ordinary audience. It is interesting to note that Cavalcanti has returned to the idea of tinting, each of the three sequences being presented in a different colour; while this is not to be recommended as a general principle, it is certainly very successful in *We Live in Two Worlds*.

C.M.

Social Study of Film

A feature of the third issue of *Theatre Workshop*, of interest to all cinema students and cinema workers, is a *Social Study of the Film* by Jay Leyda and Peter Ellis, both well-known film critics and Contributing Editors to *Theatre Workshop*. The *Social Study of the Film* is the first critical film bibliography ever to be compiled and should prove of tremendous usefulness.

The balance of the third issue is devoted entirely to articles on Staging and Directing. It includes an article on the *Naturalist School of Directing of Otto Brahm* by Herbert Henze, a *Study of the Epic Realism of Bertold Brecht* by Mordecai Gorelik, and the first part of the B. E. Zakhava's famous work, the *Principles of Directing*, which appears for the first time in English in the pages of *Theatre Workshop*.

Filming the Life of Trinidad

by Irene Nicholson

It is now just a year since Brian Montagu and I left for Trinidad to direct a film for the *Trinidad Guardian*, the Island's largest newspaper. The film has been called *Callaloo*, which is a corruption of an old Carib word meaning a hotch-potch of everything. It is the name given to a local soup into which all kinds of ingredients are put. Trinidad itself contains an extraordinary variety of peoples. Almost none of the original Carib Indians remain, having been entirely wiped out by various European invasions. English, French, Spanish and Portuguese have settled in the island, and the Negroes, East Indians and Chinese originally imported as labourers (the Negroes as slaves, the East Indians and Chinese under systems of indenture) have all made the island their home. All these races equally call themselves, and are, Trinidadian.

"Callaloo"

The mixture of races causes colour prejudices and difficulties of such complexity that it would take a lifetime to sort them all out. White people will not mix with people of colour, and coloured people of light complexion consider themselves superior to those who are dark.

The industries of the island are as varied as the population. Besides the mining of asphalt and oil, there is extensive cultivation of sugar, cocoa, coconuts, rice, grape-fruit and bananas.

All these races and all these industries are included in the film, so that it well deserves the name Callaloo.

It is now about two years since the *Trinidad Guardian* actually initiated the project of the film, which, it is hoped, will raise sufficient funds to help in the building and endowment of a sanatorium in the Port of Spain, the capital of Trinidad. Trinidad itself first heard of the idea when the *Guardian* held in its columns a competition for local "stars." The competition was divided into seven sections—for the hero, heroine (these two open to members of the white community), Creole vamp, villain, East Indian, Chinese and juvenile leads. Competitors entered by sending in their photographs, and readers of the *Guardian* voted by coupon.

The first problem was the story; how to invent one that should include a leading part for each of the variegated cast! And how, moreover, it should be made to include the many industries, amenities and beauties of the island, and be, in spite or on account of this grand "callaloo," a dramatic and truthful whole.

We spent many weeks getting to know the island. The scenario eventually evolved begins with a prologue describing how Trinidad, though once part of the mainland of South America, has now its own unique existence, how its peoples came there and what they came to do, and how they now live, together but separate.

Although a love story then begins, the real stars are workers in the fields and in the town. Ursula Johnson, a young Indo-Chinese, will attract attention. The scenes are laid in Port of Spain, and on the estates and beaches and beauty places of both Trinidad and its ward Tobago.

We spent three months "shooting" and took eighteen thousand feet of film; this will be cut eventually to about 6,000 feet.

Mr. des Foldes, of R.C.A. Victor, visited Trinidad a short while ago. He recorded a number of gramophone records especially for the film, and these will be put on to film and synchronised when we return to England. The story is played entirely in mime, and will be accompanied by local songs and music which will provide rhythmic and dramatic emphasis. Only the prologue has spoken words. Edric Connor, a Negro baritone, will sing several songs of local composition. Some of the music has been written by himself.

Students of Biology see Revision Films

Revision films for matriculation and school certificate candidates were shown at the Tatler Theatre, Charing Cross Road, on the last two Saturdays in May. Over 1,400 boys and girls from London Schools filled the entire theatre at both performances.

The following films made up the two hour programme: *The Amoeba*, a microscopic and diagrammatic study; *The Tortoiseshell Butterfly*, *The Frog*, *The Earthworm* and *The Black-headed Gull*, showing in detailed close-ups the transformations of each; *Breathing*, *Blood* and *Circulation*, three biological expositions; *Roots*, *The Life Cycle of a Plant* and *How Plants Feed*, illustrated by accelerated growth; and *The Expansion of Germany* and *The Growth of the Franchise since* 1832 for historical students.

The films were made by Gaumont-British Instructional, with the collaboration of Dr. Julian Huxley and H. R. Brewer, M.Sc. (Zoology and Biology), Professor E. J. Salisbury, F.R.S. (Botany), Professor Winifred Cullis, C.B.E. (Hygiene), and Dr. G. P. Gooch, Professor Namier and J. Hampden Jackson (History).

On June 12th and 19th revision films for 1st M.B. and Intermediate Science Examinations were shown to students taking the University Biology and Zoology courses. The programme included a selection of the films mentioned above, together with *Hydra*, *Obelia*, *Sea Urchin*, and *Heredity*. The showing was private and films were shown in their entirety without the Censor's Certificate for public exhibition.

This experiment by The Tatler of showing films for the benefit of students is a big step towards education-by-film. It is probably the first showing of its kind outside the class-room, and it is hoped that next year provincial schools and universities will be supplied with similar facilities.

FILM GUIDE

Shorts

Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves (Puppets in Gaspar-color).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: Slatinay and George Pal

CARLISLE: Star Cinema	July 18, 3 days
CHEADLE HULME: Elysian	July 1, 3 days
LONGRIDGE: Palace	July 15, 3 days
SHEFFIELD: Weston	July 8, 3 days
WIGTON: Palace	July 1, 3 days

Birthplace of America (British originals of American pioneers).
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.
PRODUCTION: A. Moncrieff Davidson

ALTRINCHAM: Hippodrome	July 26, 3 days
BACUP: Regal	July 19, 3 days
BOLTON: Gem	July 8, 3 days
BRISTOL: Olympia	July 5, 3 days
Premier	July 8, 3 days
CASTLETOWN, I.O.M.: Ideal	July 8, 3 days
CONGLETON: Premier	July 8, 3 days
ECCLES: Regent	July 5, 6 days
HASLINGDEN: Empire	July 22, 3 days
HULME: Popular	July 29, 3 days
LONDONDERRY: Midland	July 26, 6 days
Strand	July 19, 6 days
NORTH WALSHAM: Regal	July 19, 3 days
OLDHAM: Cosy	July 2, 2 days

Cover to Cover (Documentary of book production).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: Strand Films
DIRECTION: Alexander Shaw

BIRMINGHAM: Kingsway, Kings Heath	July 5, 3 days
CASTLETON, LANCS.: Cosy	July 26, 3 days
HALIFAX: Kingston Picturedrome	July 8, 3 days
HARBOURNE: Picture House	July 22, 3 days
NORTHALLERTON: Empire	July 5, 3 days
NORTH SHIELDS: Gaiety	July 29, 3 days
PLAISTOW: Plaza	July 19, 3 days
ROMSEY: Plaza	July 22, 3 days
THORNABY: Queen's	July 1, 3 days

Dragon of Wales (A travelogue attempting to tackle economic conditions).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: W. B. Pollard

TORQUAY: Electric	July 12, 6 days
WIMBLEDON: King's Palace	July 26, 6 days

Enough to Eat (The nutrition film).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
PRODUCTION: Gas, Light and Coke Co.
DIRECTION: Edgar Anstey

LONDON: Everyman, Hampstead	July 12, 6 days
Monseigneur, Charing Cross Road	July 12, 3 days
Monseigneur, Strand	July 12, 3 days

Fishing on the Banks of Skye
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: John Grierson for G.P.O. Film Unit

ADLINGTON: Cinema	July 8, 3 day
BUXTON: Opera House	July 5, 6 days
LIVERPOOL: Tatler News Theatre	July 22, 3 days
SOUTHAMPTON: Cinenews Theatre	July 15, 3 days

For All Eternity (A film of English cathedrals).
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.
PRODUCTION: Strand Films
DIRECTION: Marion Grierson

AMPTHILL: Kinema	July 19, 3 days
BIRMINGHAM: Capitol, Ward End	July 8, 3 days
IRLAM: Palace	July 19, 3 days
OLTON: Cinema	July 29, 3 days
SHEFFIELD: Manor	July 5, 3 days

Heart of an Empire (Historical significance of St. James's Park and the surrounding buildings and memorials).
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.
PRODUCTION: Strand Films
DIRECTION: Marion Grierson

BALLYMENA: Lyric	July 26, 3 days
HYDE: Queens	July 29, 3 days
PEMBERTON: Carlton	July 19, 3 days
Queens	July 19, 3 days

Islands of the Bounty (Islands associated with the famous mutiny).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

ACCRINGTON: King's	July 5, 3 days
ATTERCLIFFE: Palace	July 8, 3 days
BOLTON: Palace	July 1, 3 days
BRADFORD: Tennyson	July 19, 3 days
CARLISLE: Star	July 8, 3 days
HEREFORD: Odeon	July 8, 3 days
KIRKCALDY: Palladium	July 14, 2 days
MARGATE: Parade	July 8, 7 days
SHILDON: Magnet	July 12, 6 days
SOUTH SHIELDS: Palladium	July 1, 3 days

Key to Scotland (Documentary of Edinburgh).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Marion Grierson

GLASGOW: Olympia, Bridgeton	July 15, 3 days
HULL: Monica	July 1, 3 days
STOCKPORT: Curzon, Offerton	July 5, 3 days

Lobsters (Documentary of lobster fishing).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: Bury Films
DIRECTION: John Mathias and L. Moholy Nagy

MANCHESTER: Tatler, Oxford Street	July 12, 6 days

Men Against the Sea (Documentary of North Sea trawling).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Vernon Sewell

ANDOVER: Odeon	July 8, 3 days
DONCASTER: Arcadia	July 19, 3 days
GLASGOW: Olympia, Bridgeton	July 1, 3 days
LOSSIEMOUTH: Town Hall	July 8, 3 days
YORK: Grand	July 19, 3 days

Milestones (The varying types to be seen in England).
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.
PRODUCTION: A. Moncrieff Davidson

BEIGHTON: Central Hall	July 1, 3 days
BRISTOL: Knowle	July 19, 3 days
CLITHEROE: Grand	July 12, 2 days
DALKEITH: Pavilion	July 12, 3 days
FLEETW OD Pier Pavilion	July 11, 4 days
IRVINE: Regal	July 1, 3 days
KINGSBRIDGE: Regal	July 5, 3 days
KNUTSFORD: Picture House	July 1, 3 days
LITTLEBOROUGH: Victoria Hall	July 5, 3 days
MACCLESFIELD: New	July 15, 2 days
MALTBY: Picture House	July 5, 3 days

Feature Films for July Release

Black Legion (Warner Bros.)
DIRECTOR: Archie Mayo
STARRING: Humphrey Bogart, Dick Foran, Ann Sheridan

Bulldog Drummond at Bay (Wardour)
DIRECTOR: Norman Lee
STARRING: John Lodge, Victor Jory

Feather Your Nest (A.B.F.D.)
DIRECTOR: William Beaudine
STARRING: George Formby, Polly Ward

Gold Diggers of 1937 (First National)
DIRECTOR: Lloyd Bacon
STARRING: Dick Powell, Joan Blondell

Green Pastures (Warner Bros.)
DIRECTORS: Marc Connelly, William Keighley
STARRING: Rex Ingram, Oscar Polk

Magnificent Brute (G.F.D.)
DIRECTOR: John G. Blystone
STARRING: Victor McLaglen, Binnie Barnes, Henry Armetta

MARPLE: Regent	July 1, 1 days
OAKHAMPTON: Cinema	July 29, 3 days
PENDLETON: Scala	July 26, 3 days
PWLLHELI: Palladium	July 12, 3 days
RHOS: Palace	July 1, 3 days

Night Mail (Documentary of the northward trip of the postal special).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: Basil Wright and Harry Watt

ADLINGTON: Cinema	July 8, 3 days
BRADFORD: Grange	July 29, 3 days
DUBLIN: Phoenix	July 12, 3 days
LEEDS: Gainsborough	July 12, 3 days
LYMINGTON: Lyric	July 15, 3 days
MIDDLETON: Cosy	July 9, 2 days
NORTHFIELD: Picture House	July 19, 3 days
SHEFFIELD: Weston	July 8, 3 days

Plane Sailing (The ins and outs of gliding).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Bosworth Goldman

HULL: Cecil Theatre	July 19, 6 days
JERSEY: Opera House	July 26, 6 days
KIRKCALDY: Rialto	July 8, 3 days
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Road	July 19, 7 days
NORWICH: Carlton	July 12, 6 days

Seventh Day (How London spends its Sunday).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: A. P. Barralet

GOOLE: Tower	July 29, 3 days
HULL: Carlton	July 8, 3 days
Langham	July 5, 3 days
Savoy	July 29, 3 days

The Grey Seal (Its life and habits).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
DIRECTION: John Mathias and Cyril Jenkins

LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Road	July 26, 7 days

The Saw Fly (Nature Study).
DISTRIBUTION: Gaumont-British
PRODUCTION: Mary Field

MANCHESTER: Tatler, Oxford Street	July 19, 6 days

Way to the Sea (Documentary of the roads and railways from London to the coast).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: Strand Films
DIRECTION: J. B. Holmes

LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Road	July 12, 7 days

Foreign Films

The Court Waltzes (German—French version).
PRODUCTION: Gunther Stapenhorst for Ufa
DIRECTION: Ludwig Berger
STARRING: Fernand Gravey, Jeanine Crispine

LONDON: Curzon	July 1, indefinitely

L'Equipage (French).
PRODUCTION: Pathé
DIRECTION: Anatole Litvak
STARRING: Annabella, Jean Murat

LONDON: Studio One	July 1, indefinitely

Masquerade in Vienna (Austrian).
DIRECTOR: Willi Forst
STARRING: Paula Wessely, Adolf Wohlbruck

LONDON: Forum	July 1, 3 days

Men and Jobs (Russian).
PRODUCTION: Sovkino
DIRECTION: Nacharet

LONDON: Forum	July 18, 14 days

Storm Over Asia (Russian).
PRODUCTION: Mezhrabpomfilm
DIRECTION: V. I. Pudovkin

LONDON: Forum	July 4, 14 days

We from Kronstadt (Russian).
PRODUCTION: Lenfilm
DISTRIBUTION: Film Society
DIRECTION: Vinievski

LONDON: Academy	July 1, indefinitely

It pays to use

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EXPOSURES cannot always be 100% accurate, but even where quite serious exposure errors are made, the finished films will not tell the tale if Ciné-Kodak Reversal Films (16 mm. and Eight) are used for black-and-white pictures.

In the course of processing by the reversal method (the cost of which, naturally, is included in the price of these films) *exposure mistakes are automatically compensated for* by means of a photo-electric control device, which is exclusive to the treatment of Ciné-Kodak film. Thus, even with considerable errors of exposure in either direction, you can be sure of pictures rich in tone and detail, and of a constant brightness on the screen.

Look at the accompanying illustrations. They are enlargements from two rolls of Ciné-Kodak Pan. Film, both of them over-exposed from *f*5.6 to *f*1.9, and under-exposed from *f*11 to *f*16—the correct stop being *f*8. The left strip shows you how you are "punished" for your errors by straight processing; the right strip shows how the Reversal Process "lets you off," giving you positives of an almost constant density whatever the vagaries of your exposures.

Another big advantage of Ciné-Kodak Reversal Films is their almost complete absence of graininess when projected. In the course of processing, the negative image, consisting of the larger grains, is bleached out, leaving only the minute unexposed grains to form the positive that you see on the screen. *This applies with equal force to the duplicates which by the same reversal process can be made from the original positive.*

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worldFILMnews

AMATEUR AND TECHNICAL SECTION

Illustration of Macabre Lighting

FADE IN THE FUTURE
FILMING BRITAIN, No. 3
SOCIETY AND CLUB NEWS
HOW TO BUILD A SET, No. 2

CONTRIBUTORS

Andrew Buchanan

Evelyn Spice

H. Chevalier

Fade in the Future

by Andrew Buchanan

This is the final article of Mr. Buchanan's series for amateurs. Under the title "Film Production from Script to Screen," these articles will be published in book form by Faber & Faber, early in autumn.

WHERE is it all going to end—or begin!

Technical prophets visualise strange circular cinemas fed by Televising Studios, with a perpetual pageant of stereoscopic pictures, in natural colour. They talk of screens as large as theatre prosceniums, of spectacles mightier than ever before; of new marvels in sound recording—new personalities who have mastered a new technique demanded by televising-movie-cameras—new make-up—everything new, except, of course, the foundations upon which the Film is built—the Story. That can look after itself. As technicians, naturally, they are distracted by each new invention which enables them to embellish their pictures—a spot of polish here, a dash of colour there, and so on, and as the modern film is about seventy per cent technical, and thirty per cent creative, the tendency is to make flawless productions of unsuitable subjects.

Nevertheless, some realise that the real future of the film depends upon those who have its independence at heart—people who refuse to be distracted by the enormity of the whole business—who can see that the bones beneath the perfumed flesh need resetting. They are, and always have been, experimenting to produce subjects peculiar to the screen, and, from my experience, their efforts have advanced the medium to a far greater extent than the costly pictures which are the result of exploiting every new invention to the utmost degree. When talking pictures were first made possible, everybody produced talking pictures! Dialogue had to be introduced at all costs, otherwise the results would be out of date. Directors were far more concerned with the task of finding subjects depending upon speech than with the fact that, valuable and marvellous though the invention was, it tended to mould the film into a pattern foreign to its nature.

Sanity to the Survivors

So with Colour. Subjects are chosen to exploit every possible hue. Discretion is thrown to the wind. The intensely dramatic value of one *red* drop of blood in an otherwise black and white picture is lost sight of. They will drown themselves in Colour—dye in it, in fact, after which sanity will come to the survivors, and the magical process will be introduced judiciously.

Stereoscopic photography will make "characters completely life-like." What characters? One should be careful to ascertain they are the right ones, and that they justify the concentration of technical magicians being bestowed upon them, so that they "stand out" in all their natural colours, their softest whispers being audible to thousands of people simultaneously. Being human, these characters can talk, and the formula for the successsful film is that they should exercise this gift to the utmost! But is the power of speech of primary importance to the screen? Thus the mind of the man who has the future of film at heart should reason, accepting nothing until it has been analysed, and found correct.

Of all media, film offers the greatest opportunity to the student, for, despite its air of self-confidence, its luxurious setting, and its world popularity, it is still seeking its true self, or, perhaps I should say, seeking a way to popularise its true self which has been discovered by the Documentalist. The technical advances made in photography, with its smoothly moving cameras, and in sound recording, during the past fifteen years, have aided film towards its goal tremendously, and yet they have tended to hide that goal from view—a goal which is solely dependent upon the method of approaching the subject matter one intends to portray.

That is why the person with the humblest outfit, or no outfit at all, providing he has a mind fully conscious of true film values, will come nearest to the solution.

Find the Formula

Throughout this series, I have stressed the need to make films on paper before tackling actual production, and it is upon paper that the future will be gradually formulated, regardless of one's status in professional or amateur circles.

And yet, it may be said, progress would never allow film to find a formula, and to adhere to it for evermore, for whilst there is life there will be evolution towards something better—or perhaps, it would be safer to say, different. That is true, but let us first find the formula, and then let the future look after itself, rather than to talk of progress, as we do, with the formula undiscovered. Therefore, follow in the wake of the progressive Documentalists, realising their limitations from a fictional point of view, and endow their principles with human drama and comedy. Frame the story you are longing to produce in realistic settings, and prepare to meet the criticism of those who can think of no way in which to produce pictures save within a studio.

They will tell you that climate is going to reduce your carefully planned shooting schedule to chaos. You reply that, with the aid of artificial lights, you can secure delightful results, at dawn, noon and dusk, even when the sun is not shining. They will tell you that the highly paid cameramen who specialise in synthetic close-ups of beautiful women are in a class alone, and that the documentary cameramen who are excellent at securing close-ups of cog-wheels, are hopeless when asked to obtain attractive shots of blonde belles and their brave beaux. That, too, is an exaggeration. I have worked with cameramen for years, whose salaries amounted only to the weekly luncheon bills of their studio counterparts, and they have shot stars of the first magnitude so perfectly that the said stars have declared they have never been so beautifully shot before. In fact, one of them, a particularly famous and attractive personality, actually took her film to a big studio where she was making a feature picture, and showed it to the crack technicians as an example of just how she should be filmed!

The keynote of this concluding chapter is encouragement—to pull down finally the giant structure that has no foundations—the colossal studio system which has developed *Retaking* into a fine and costly art—which allows all the people making a picture, to make so much money out of it, that the picture makes a loss. The grandeur of Hollywood's commercial methods have been applied in Britain, which should have instituted a film industry according to its limited market.

Shakespeare must surely have perceived the dim shape of film when he wrote, "All the World's a Stage . . .", for indeed it is to the film-maker, although he has not realised the fact. Instead, his synthetic efforts justify the sentence, "All the Film's a Stage . . .", bounded by studio walls.

The limits of the territory available to the film-maker are marked by the rising and setting of the sun, but what shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and works only in his kitchen? When the existing gulf between documentary and fictional films has been fully realised, and bridged by the plans of the imaginative director, the result, the fictional-documentary film, will achieve universal recognition.

Then, the Future will slowly fade in.

SCOTTISH EDUCATIONISTS STATE THEIR NEEDS

The Scottish Educational Film Association announces the following requirements:

1. We want more films of the following kinds:

(A) AMATEUR PRODUCTIONS.

(1) 100ft. and 200ft. animal studies suitable for city children.

(2) 100 ft. and 200ft. studies illustrating city activities, maritime scenes, etc., for country children.

(B) TRADE PRODUCTIONS.

(3) 100ft. and 200ft., for children of from 5 to 12 years of age, showing very simple processes of country life, simple industrial processes, and animals and birds with their young. (The Carrick Series mainly consists of this type.)

(4) 400ft. Nature films for old children, showing habits of animals and birds and the use made by man of both animals and plants.

(We do *not* want the "speeded-up" film. There is a good supply of that kind.)

(5) 200ft. or 400ft. simple "Science" films for primary school children illustrating the more elementary principles of Mechanics, etc., or demonstrating simple machines.

(6) 100ft. microscopic studies of the lower forms of plant and animal life.

(7) 400ft. films of foreign countries, illustrating principal products, etc.—either with or without diagrams and with a minimum number of maps.

2. Generally speaking, we want—

Films with the minimum of commentary.

Films that have been planned for teaching purposes.

Films that are better, on the average, in respect of photography and reproduction.

Cheaper films.

Note.—Reference is to *silent* films only (sub-standard).

FILMING BRITAIN—Article No. 3

by Evelyn Spice

I HAVE had so many letters asking for more particulars regarding the British Amateur Services Club that I am going to use this page in WORLD FILM NEWS to outline, in greater detail, the opportunities offered to Amateurs.

Its *purposes* have been outlined in earlier issues of WORLD FILM NEWS so I shall not repeat, but go straight to the Amateur's individual problem.

To encourage 16 mm. and 9 mm. documentary makers, there are prizes offered for films on:

Hygiene and Home Planning
Motoring
An Orient Line Cruise
Scottish Youth Hostels
Architecture

These are the first of a number of prizes that will be offered to members of the Club throughout the next year.

What to do

Choose which one of these subjects you can handle to the best advantage.

Write to me and tell me what your choice is.

If you cannot cope with any of the above mentioned subjects, write and say so and we shall keep you in mind for any fresh subject which may come along.

Give me as many particulars as you can about your work, your opportunities locally, where you will spend your holidays, and your own interests in general. I cannot help you if I have no facts to go on.

Send me, if you wish, a draft of your proposed treatment of the subject, when chosen. Perhaps I shall be able to suggest changes or additions, and much time will be saved on the final shot by shot script. You will find it is a real pleasure to shoot to a good script, well prepared in advance. It is well worth putting a good deal of time on the preparation and less on the actual shooting.

Subjects and Treatments

Now as to the subjects. There are many treatments possible for each of them and in each case it is obvious that, without planning, the film could easily be a hotch-potch with a little of everything and none of the interesting detail and human interest that makes films live. This applies, most of all, to the Motoring and Youth Hostel subjects, but, to a slightly lesser extent, to all of them.

What then seems to be the principal thing to keep in mind in order to escape the muddled touch-and-go-on film?

Mainly this. Keep the treatment simple. Don't try to tell too much. Make a simple example (typical of many) tell the whole story. The example may be a person or a group of persons, an incident or a group of incidents linked together, a single day or hour, etc., a single house or street, etc.—or any two or three of these coupled together.

This simple example linked with, perhaps, a general opening or closing sequence to widen the film's horizon, will allow us to take time for the small details about people and things which are so vital to the film's interest.

This probably doesn't mean a thing to anybody, so I shall give an example of one of the "examples" I've been talking about.

A group of people—a family, preferably—are travelling by car and intend to have a camp lunch; can't make up their minds where to stop; mother very fussy; son, who is driving, thinks he knows a good place a mile or so farther on. They drive several miles and still haven't found the spot. Father is wanting to stop straight away as he is very hungry. Finally their problem is solved for them by the car. It stops. The son discovers that he has run out of petrol. Mother angry; a fine to-do as the place is not nearly so nice as a dozen others they have passed a while back. Father says nothing but begins to get out the lunch kit very quickly. Sister helps. Mother sulks at first, then, cheered by sight of food, brightens up. Son goes off to find nearest telephone or garage, for petrol; returning with can of petrol as lunch is ready. Family is happy again. The countryside is wonderful to the family *after lunch*. The farmyard nearby is a wonderful place where there are darling little pigs. The camping place is wonderful, everything is wonderful. They discover a little brook, a rabbit's burrow. Father has a nap. Everyone is happy.

Post-Synchronising

This film would be made with a view to sound being superimposed. The very short sentences, if carefully recorded at the time of shooting, could be post-synchronised, if it were decided to put sound on the film. Music would emphasize the changing moods of the family.

Plenty of human touches. Plenty of opportunity to show the beauty and tranquility of the country as seen by a city family. Plenty of opportunity to emphasize that it is the can of petrol which is responsible for their enjoying one of the finest experiences of a lifetime.

It will be seen from this, I hope, that the single incident is good only if it has a wide background both visually and in human significance. This incident, for instance, is a thing which happens to almost every family on a camping trip, not a unique occurrence.

(NOTE: When I asked you earlier on to send me a draft of your proposed treatment, I meant send me something quite as brief as the above "example." It will serve as well as an elaborately detailed script. Doing it that way, you will have time to draft two or three treatments, and if you are in doubt about which one to choose, I may be of help to you.)

Open to Professionals

Our amateur competition scheme has stirred up great interest and speculation in professional circles. Strong jealousies have been exhibited on the subjects at the disposal of amateurs and barred to professionals. We, therefore, offer consolation prizes: the first, £5; the second, £3, and the third, £1 for films performing a local service, by accredited professionals. Selected subjects will have to be considered by Miss Spice as we wish to avoid duplication and unpleasant rivalries.

Mr. Alfred Hitchcock, best known of 16 mm. cinematographers, stands a fair chance of a prize and we hope he will enter. Mr. John Grierson has in advance booked a subject to be shot at East Malling agricultural research station.

TECHNICAL TITBITS No. 1

There are various ways of cleaning cinema screens, some screens can be cleaned with methylated spirit, others with soapy water; the best dope for a plain white matt surface, in my opinion, is "Ceilingite" when properly applied, but best of all, send it back to the makers and have it done properly.

* * * *

The best way to remove hardened emulsion from the runners and tracks in a projector is by damping it with spittal and rubbing off with moistened fingers. In obstinate cases, a copper coin only should be used, any harder metals will permanently damage the fine surfaces of the runners.

* * * *

A double gin taken internally before cleaning optics is a valuable aid. Simply breathe on the optics and polish off immediately afterwards—its not so wasteful anyway!

* * * *

That fluffy dirty appearance surrounding the projected picture at times is officially termed "dirt in the gate." It is due to your own carelessness as a rule, but this unsightly mess which hall-marks you as a bad operator, can be tactfully disposed of by (1) blowing out the aperture with a strong gusto, (2) framing the picture so that the dark line separating each frame is brought down, or up, on the screen to cover up your dirty past.

* * * *

A quarter pound of rice which has been heated until it is a golden brown, placed into a sealed container with 1,000 feet of film, has been found more satisfactory as an absorbent of moisture than calcium chloride on wrinkled paper, and has no detrimental effect on the film, says the *Filmo Topics*.

I recommend this tip, but be careful the rice does not become too moist in itself, otherwise it will stick to the film, and the next time you show it, a rice pudding effect might be seen on the screen!

* * * *

The interval between the film in the picture gate on 16 mm. and the sound record into the photo electric cell is 25 frames.

DAVID MYERS.

FILM SOCIETIES AND CLUBS

THE LONDON FILM SOCIETY: Hon. Secretary, Miss B. Frey, 56 Manchester Street, W.1.

The offices of the above society will be closed from July 12th to August 9th.

CAITHNESS FILM SOCIETY: Secretary, J. W. P. Faint, Esq., Sumburgh, Hill Avenue, Wick, Caithness.

On May 21st, Miss Hazel Terry, grand niece of Ellen Terry, made a special journey to Wick to appear at a variety entertainment in aid of local charities. Miss Terry, star of *The Marriage of Corbal* and *Our Fighting Navy*, was given a tremendous ovation when she arrived at her hotel, and later she attended a dance and mixed most happily with everybody.

The visit was arranged by Mr. Faint, Secretary of the Society.

CATHOLIC FILM SOCIETY: Hon. Secretary, Rev. Ferdinand Valentine, O.P., 36 Great Smith Street, London, S.W.1.

Discussing the Annual Report at the June display at Millicent Fawcett Hall, at which the President, Bishop McNulty of Nottingham, was present, the Organising Secretary, Rev. Ferdinand Valentine, O.P., said that during the past year progress had been maintained. Besides the monthly displays at Millicent Fawcett Hall, there had been 120 displays. Several films, including an industrial film entitled *Great Awakening* and a film on the Holy Eucharist, were now in production. The Projection Group has increased its stock.

The Mime Group is the Society's most important development, because the Catholic film depends on its mimetic quality.

The Group is under the able direction of Miss Julia Murray, a pupil of Miss Gertrude Pickersgill of the L.A.D.A., and a weekly class is held at the Interval Club, Dean Street, Soho. Full particulars may be had from the Assistant Secretary, 36 Gt. Smith Street, S.W.1.

In collaboration with Miss Pickersgill, the Mime Group presented *The Mirror*, an Eastern fable, after which *Dominican Mass* was screened, and the programme ended with the film made by J.O.C. (Christian Working Youth) showing recent demonstrations in Belgium.

The next display is at 8 p.m. on Wednesday, July 7th, at Millicent Fawcett Hall, Westminster. Tickets 1*s.* and 1*s.* 6*d.* from The Assistant Secretary.

MANCHESTER AND SALFORD FILM SOCIETY: Hon. Secretary, R. Cordwell, Esq., 13 Milwain Drive, Heaton Chapel, Stockport.

The following officers have been elected: Mr. T. Cavanagh (late Secretary, Manchester and Salford Workers' Film Society), Chairman; Ian R. Robinson, Hon. Membership Secretary; F. J. Stevenson, Hon. Treasurer. Subscription remains at 10*s.*, which can be paid in instalments of 2*s.* 6*d.* within the first six months after joining. Seven performances are to be arranged at the Rivoli Cinema, Rusholme, with an additional show if finances permit. Mr. J. A. Brewin has been nominated for the Executive of the Federation of British Film Societies, which has been applied to for membership. Discussions are taking place as to possible co-ordination with other film societies giving lectures, etc.

OXFORD FILM SOCIETY: Hon. Secretary, E. F. Bowtell, Esq., 105 Victoria Road, Oxford.

The thirteenth and last meeting of the season, was held at the Scala Cinema on June 6th, when *Der Schimmelreiter*, starring Matthias Wieman and Marianne Hope, headed the programme. Taken from the old Friesian legend, *Der Schimmelreiter* is notable chiefly for its exterior photography and for its simplicity in depicting the struggle of a fenland people against the constant danger of flooding. Scenario and direction is by Curt Oetel and Hans Deppe, production by R. Fritsch Tonfilm.

Supporting films included *How to Vote* (Robert Benchley's sequel to *How to Sleep* and *How to Behave*), *Hungarian Dance* (a Fischinger musical abstract), Massingham's comedy *And So To Work*, and Disney's *Band Concert*.

WEST ESSEX FILM SOCIETY: Hon. Secretary, F. J. Philpott, 7 Wellington Road, East Ham, London, E.6.

The Society is making preparations for the production of another film. The script is nearing completion, and it is hoped to commence shooting in the near future. Further information regarding the production will appear later.

A film unit has been formed which will include among its operations the filming of carnivals, fêtes, etc.

MERSEYSIDE FILM UNIT: Hon. Secretary, Cyril Ray, Esq., 377 Oxford Road, Manchester 13.

In view of the film industry's alleged reluctance to make films to the requirements of teachers and of the rather unorganised activities of most amateur film societies, a recent Lancashire development is not without interest.

The Merseyside Film Institute Society formed twelve months ago the first amateur film unit to be organised by a branch of the British Film Institute. The unit was composed of two production groups, one working with 16 mm. film stock, the other with 9.5 mm. Two films were completed last summer, one, *Morning Boat*, 300 feet long on 16 mm., the other, *The Rise of Liverpool*, 300 feet on 9.5 mm. The former was a straightforward documentary film of ferryboats, the latter a more ambitious historico-geographical account in which moving diagrams were employed together with "straight" photography.

As a result of the experience gained in the making of these two films, the unit has now decided to work solely on 16 mm. stock and to make films of specific educational character. Work has begun on two films about tides, and scenarios written after consulting prominent Liverpool educationalists. One film is in general terms, planned to be a "background" or revisional teaching film, the other a shorter film, is designed purely as a classroom teaching film to be used with detailed teaching notes.

Unusual facilities have already been given by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, the Tidal Institute and Liverpool University.

Unlike most amateur film-making societies, the Merseyside unit is employing the more expensive negative-positive film stock, which permits of an unlimited number of copies being cheaply made, rather than reversal stock, as it is expected that there will be some demand for these teaching films.

ACE MOVIES: Hon. Secretary, Channon Wood, Esq., 15 Openview, S.W.18. Studio, 90 High Street Mews, Wimbledon, S.W.19.

The assortment of building materials, referred to last month, which were cluttering up all approaches to the studios, have now been absorbed into the completed set, and the cameras have started to turn. Clifford West, directing, comes into his own after an irritating period of waiting.

The only serious snag to date is a "floater," designed to be easily mobile but which, owing to the enthusiasm of the construction department and the large quantity of wood at their disposal, defies the efforts of seven strong men and necessitates the muscular resources of the whole unit every time it has to be moved.

The lighting equipment has been completely overhauled and several new units added. Kandem lamps, together with those constructed according to Ace Movies' specifications, make up the illumination available to 15 kilowatts.

Visitors are welcome to come on Thursdays and Saturdays, 8.30 to 11 p.m.

THE EXPERIMENTAL FILM EXCHANGE: Hon. Secretary, Vivian Braun, 27 Ridgeway, S.W.19.

The object of this Society is to learn the rudiments of cutting, camera angles and lighting and to evolve a grammar of the film. The first step is the filming of emotional episodes—re-union, excitement, misery, fear—in fact, to shoot short film essays in order to learn the best approach to each subject.

As yet, experiments on both standard and substandard have been few, but it is hoped that this summer new fields will be explored and a new approach to the cinema developed. It is hoped to enrol more members—but the point is emphasised that the Society's work is not simply amateur film-making, but practical experiments in cinema as an art.

AYR FILM UNIT: Hon. Secretary, A. Cunningham, Esq., 8 Alexandra Avenue, Prestwick, Ayrshire.

The unit, founded some six months ago with twelve members, has now completed camerawork on its first production, and its membership has increased to thirty. The film, provisionally titled *Checkmate*, is from an original story by G. R. Cooper, the director, and should be off the cutting benches in a fortnight or so. Scenes were shot mainly indoors by artificial light, and on location in the entrance hall of a cinema, in a hotel ballroom and a local billiard hall.

During the summer, interest will be centred on an advertising film which the unit is making at the request of Ayr Attractions Committee. Although setting out to advertise Ayr, the film will have a story running through it, written by a small committee of club members with the co-operation of Mr. Cooper. Shooting is expected to cover about six weeks.

Membership of the club is open to all who are interested in cinematography whether they own apparatus or not. Jobs can always be found in the various departments.

Club News (contd.)

BRADFORD CINE CIRCLE: Hon. Secretary, A. C. Whitehead, Esq., The Towers, Clayton, Bradford.

On Sunday, June 6th, shooting began on the Society's first colour production, *Beauties of the Yorkshire Dales*, which is being made by the 16 mm. section. A party of members covered some 150 miles and secured some fine shots.

Another section has been busy on Mr. J. North's scenario of *Murder Will Out*. It is being made on 9.5 mm., and will probably be 500 feet in length. Shooting began on June 13th, in Horton Park, Bradford.

During the summer impromptu meetings are to be held on Monday evenings at the house of the President, Mr. C. Tempest, 386 Great Horton Road, Bradford, and all interested will be cordially welcomed.

WIMBLEDON CINE CLUB: Hon. Secretary C. W. Watkins, 79 Mostyn Road, Merton Park, S.W.19.

Many social functions and rambles, in addition to the monthly meetings, are being arranged for both ordinary and associate members during the summer months. The 1937-38 programme is also being arranged, and will include the usual number of evenings allotted to associates, of which there are now about fifty.

The club has had the privilege of filming the local Coronation festivities for the Council, and with several cameras on the job a record of the complete week's programme has been made. The Mayor has granted the Club free use of the film, and a public showing is being arranged to take place in the Town Hall.

For the third time in the history of the Wimbledon Cine Club, several members have decided to take their holidays together; this time the party will visit Germany on a canoeing tour.

The current production of the club, *Swing Mr. Charlie*, is continuing under Brian Smith's direction, but it is unlikely that it will be finished before the commencement of the winter session early in October.

The Club has now joined the British Film Institute, and through them are affiliated to the London Film Institute Society, which means that members will now receive additional benefits.

METROPOLITAN-VICKERS AMATEUR CINE AND PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY: Hon. Secretary, R. M. Kay, Esq., Trafford Park, Manchester 17.

Manchester Exports is the title of a new 16 mm. documentary film just being put into production by the makers of *Inward Bound*, the Gold Medal film of the Manchester Ship Canal.

The film is planned to show that Manchester, concerned not only with cotton, holds an important position in engineering and other fields. Naturally a film of this nature will not attempt to catalogue in detail the many branches of industry that flourish within the city, but will endeavour to give an impression of each. Close-ups will be used very largely, partly to give a personal touch to the film, and partly, due to practical considerations, to facilitate lighting and shooting industrial scenes.

J. M. Fleming, who is in charge of camera-work, has had experience both in this country and the United States, whilst the direction will be in the hands of R. M. Kay, also largely responsible for the scenario.

At the recent Annual General Meeting of the Society, new officers were elected for the season 1937-8, and constitution changes effected which involved the splitting up of membership into Technical and General classes. A short 9.5 mm. comedy, *Treasure Hunt*, is now on the editing bench and will be released shortly.

ELTHAM CINE SOCIETY: Hon. Secretary, Miss V. D. White, 36 Craigton Road, Eltham, S.E.9. Studios, Melladew House, 256 Eltham High Street, S.E.9.

The Society is now hard at work on *The Emperor's New Clothes*, a sound film in natural colour. This is an adaptation of the old fairy tale of the same name, and is being shot "straight."

Much interest has been aroused by the publication of descriptions of the apparatus used in the production of amateur sound films. The apparatus used by this Society was designed and built by two members, Messrs. D. Pruden and J. Shore, and the Secretary will be glad to give details to anyone interested.

For one week in September, a unit will be on location at Bedruthen Steps, Cornwall, for the production of a short outdoor film in colour. When completed, the studio will be ready for the next full-length film, as yet untitled.

2,000 Exhibitors can't be wrong

The Western Electric Co. Ltd., are this year celebrating their tenth birthday in the United Kingdom, so. I for one, wish them " Many Happy Returns."

As one of their very first projectionists, it would be ten years ago that I was first introduced to them in a one-roomed apartment in Bush House. At that time, they were superintending their first two installations in the West End: to-day, owning several floors at Bush House with a huge factory at Cricklewood, they have well over two thousand installations in cinemas in this country alone.

This amazing growth is not surprising when one considers the faithful service these equipments have given to exhibitors all over the world during that period. This is due not only to the constant research on the problems of sound recording and reproduction, but to a great degree on the wonderful service organisation that keeps these thousands of equipments in first-class order. It can be said of each installation, whether it be ten years or one month old, that it is in the same condition as when originally installed, therefore the sound, though in many cases improved upon, is the same too as at the commencement.

Without exception, every other known make of sound apparatus has been displaced at some time or other by Western, yet it is extremely seldom, if at all, that any other make has displaced Western on the grounds of inferior sound.

There was a time when exhibitors revolted against what they termed "Western's exorbitant service charges," but they knew only too well what that service meant—day and night service at call for any immediate emergency—and an engineer always on the spot and always on the dot.

Considering that Western have no vested interests in the Cinema themselves, and bearing in mind the high initial and subsequent servicing costs, one can only conclude that on the merits alone of their wonderful equipment and faithful reproduction and service, they have rightly commanded the praise of millions and millions of picturegoers. And remember, 2,000 exhibitors can't be wrong, can they? D.M.

Left Book Groups Plan Realist Films

FILM & PHOTO LEAGUE: A conference on the use of sub-standard film in social education, held on 7th June, was attended by delegates of the Left Book Club, London discussion circles, and other interested societies. Mr. Michael Burke, opening the conference from the chair, briefly outlined the history of working-class film organisations, and held that we were on a wave of fresh demand for progressive and purposeful films. Dr. John Lewis, for the Left Book Club, spoke on the possibilities of ciné projection as partner to the printed word, and he emphasised the value of visual image in the forceful presentation of economic statistics.

The League organised the conference as a definite step towards the formation of associate film units within all the Left Book regional and other groups, to concentrate on the production and exhibition of realist films, under guidance and training from a vital central organisation.

The conference closed with the projection of two of the League's films, one of a new type, embodying the symbolical use of Kodachrome colour in dealing with the public events of the last month. These films, together with other examples of what may be done in creative use of the film medium, will be shown at the Left Book Club Summer School at Digswell Park from 31st July to 14th August, where the League will also run a film work-room and stage a short story film. Those interested, who were not represented at the Conference, should get into touch with the Secretary at 3 Somerset Terrace, W.C.1 (Tel. EUSton 4829).

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HOW TO BUILD A SET

by

H. Chevalier, F.P.S., A.S.E.

This is the second article of a new series. The first article appeared in the June number.

WE are now going to examine the requirements of the kitchen set. As previously explained, our film opens in the kitchen of a dilapidated house in the Midlands, with the final sequences also staged in the same kitchen.

The first points to be settled are (1) movements called for by the scenario, or more simply, the movements and actions required by the players to obtain the necessary action; (2) camera angles. These fundamentals can be made clear by drawing a plan on sectional ruled drawing paper, divided into 1/12th squares, each square representing one inch.

Set Layout

Our stage measures 20 ft. by 18 ft., and this size must first be marked out on the sectional paper. Inside the area marked out we lay out the set-plan called for by the scenario. On the left we require an alleyway. For this 4 ft. is allowed, giving the first wall of the set. To the right we require a back kitchen, allowing 5 ft. for this section, giving a length of 11 ft. for the main kitchen set.

Allowing for camera room, the width of the kitchen cannot be greater than 12 ft., for we have to take into consideration space for the actors entering the kitchen from the street. Having fixed the dimensions, the next step is roughing in the furniture required—not very elaborate in this case—consisting of two chairs, a table, and three boxes for shelves.

Camera Angles

Working out camera angles is rather more difficult than is sometimes appreciated, if a breakaway from flat, uninteresting angles is to be made. Reading from the script, we find our picture opens with a close shot of a player sitting at the table eating. The door opens and two men enter and converse with the player, who calls his wife from the back kitchen. Sounds simple enough, but we must make the scene move, otherwise the whole thing will be flat. Commencing at part A*, we shoot a close-up of the player eating. Tracking back to B and panning over to the sound accompaniment of a door closing, we reveal two men standing by the door. As they approach the table we pull back to C, a position allowing a pan over to pick up the wife working in the back kitchen, and her entry into the kitchen when called.

The moment she passes the door we track into D, tracking into B again when she picks up the teapot from the kitchen range and pours out a cup of tea at the table. The remainder of the scene is played from this point, for the only movement to the left is a pan shot following one of the men to the window and back again.

*See illustrations on p. 47.

Kitchen Set, ½″ Scale

In the final sequence the angles are quite different—avoiding an error, too often apparent in amateur films, namely using the same shots twice. This is not only bad technically, but reveals to the people who see the film how little you understand their mentality, for they can spot those duplicated shots with ease.

For the last shots, then, we start at A with a close-up of the player taking money out of a cocoa tin on the shelf at the left. Tracking back to B, we pan with him as he walks to the table, picking up his wife standing on the other side of the table.

From this position we are able to see the door flung open and two men enter and walk towards the table. We have a new set-up from here, taking the camera into the back kitchen, point C, where we can take the two plain clothes men hiding behind the wall and a long shot of the players trying to make a get-away through the window, followed by the plain clothes men. We again have a new set up at D by the door, to take the plain clothes men appearing at the window and preventing the players from escaping. This, followed by the entry of other officers through the front door, and the fight that takes place subsequently.

With the angles worked out the rest is simple calculation. The amount of set required, the width of door openings, window position, and the removable walls required are automatically decided for us, so we can proceed to build the set.

Building the Set

In building this set, allowance must be made for revamping or alterations, as the script calls for four other settings: a police station, the steel mill manager's office, a hotel bedroom and a village pub. That sounds a great deal more difficult than it really is, for all we require are sectional walls using the various sections in different combinations.

The walls are of hessian, stretched on a framework made from rough 2 in. by 2 in. deal battens set up as follows. The left hand wall, section A (see key plan), will be a frame measuring 7 ft. long by 9 ft. high. The window section, B, will be a plywood section, 2 ft. by 9 ft., with the window frame made up from prepared 2 in. by 1 in. deal nailed together, fitted with hinges to open and close. Section C and D, measuring 3 ft. by 9 ft. and 6 ft. 9 in. by 9 ft. respectively, are again hessian on deal frames.

The door section, E, is constructed from three-ply with a door frame of 3 in. by 2 in. prepared deal. The door itself, 3 ft. by 6 ft. 6 in., can either be an old door off a shed or some such structure, or made up from ½-in. matching with the cross battens of 3 in. by 1 in. prepared deal. A cheap lock, preferably second-hand, will complete this part.

Section F, 4 ft. by 9 ft. is again hessian on deal framing, and this also applies to the upper section of the kitchen range above the mantle board. The range itself is constructed from plywood and prepared deal, copying near enough the general lines of a kitchen range, an oven on the left, fire in the centre, and hob on the right. Both side walls are plywood, while the back is filled with hessian (this for the reverse shot, C, final sequence).

For the opening, cross-wall and upright, J, hessian can again be used, while the back kitchen wall, H, can be hessian with a window frame of prepared 2 in. by 2 in. deal let in. The copper is plywood and ½ in. matching, the sink and draining board ½ in. matching. Cover the side wall of the kitchen range nearest the open side of the set and the copper front with a thin coating of plaster of paris, marking in the cracks carefully. These are seen at fairly close range and will otherwise show up badly, while the back kitchen side wall, I, is also hessian on deal framing, tight up against the wall of the stage. The walls are then covered with the cheapest and most gaudy wallpaper possible, fixed with a good size paste direct on the hessian, leaving the range side wall covered with plaster unpapered. Mark out the cracks on the walls when dry with cheap brown oil paint. This will run slightly on the wallpaper, and the oil will give greasy marks, just what are required.

How to Build a Set (cont.)

Next, mix some whitewash or ceiling white and spray the top wall sections with a thin coat, trailing it down towards the floor in the corners. This will impart a damp appearance to the walls. Follow this by tearing the paper in places, be careful to tear the paper from the top downwards and leave the torn piece hanging, spraying the hessian revealed with dirty grey whitewash.

Paint the door and window frame with dark grey paint, the range a dull black, touching up the oven door-knob and ash-pit cover-knob (if any) with light grey.

Then comes the floor. This can be covered with cheap lino having a tile pattern, then scratched to represent cracks, the scratches darkened with paint, and the gloss removed with a thin coat of medium grey, or alternatively manufactured as in the studios. For this method, cover the floor with hessian stretched tight and nailed down along the edges with large headed nails or tacks. Brown paper is then pasted over the top and painted with the required pattern and varnished with copal varnish. The question is one of personal choice.

For the cross shot of the door and window the 3 ft. panel, E, is removed and as the door opens inwards revealing the space outside, a black curtain is stretched taut against the back studio wall. For those who wish to produce a foggy effect, stretch a grey gauze about 1 ft. 6 in. in front of the black curtain, and back light it. Outside the window duplicate the curtain, and if used, the gauze.

Lighting is largely a matter of personal taste, but there are several fundamentals to watch. First the scene must be lighted in a low key, keeping to the atmosphere associated mentally with a house of this type where the only illumination is gas. Handle your lighting as in the picture on the cover of this month's technical section, but lighting in a slightly higher key than that particular example.

Put some well diffused light on the back walls, and use fairly heavy diffusion on the camera if the scene is a foggy one. If a fire is wanted, place a photoflood light behind a couple of thicknesses of gauze and one or two small pieces of dark paper between, to give the broken effect of a coalfire.

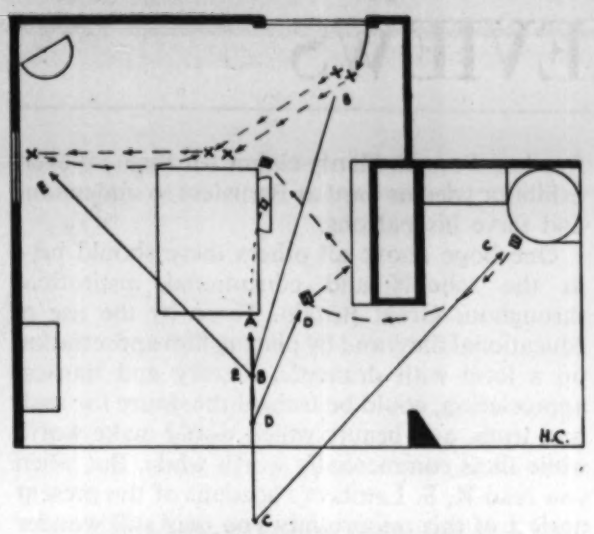
As a general rule, try to balance the lighting so that the highlights receive slightly less than twice the light of the shadow side. In some cases, with super fast film, it may be safe to increase this amount slightly. In cases as the above, expose for the shadows, and if the light is properly balanced, the highlights will be all right.

When tracking from a close shot, mount a lamp on the camera dolly, dimming the light by one half when close in, increasing the intensity as you pull back. Never use the same lamps to illuminate the characters and the background, otherwise you will have well-lit people moving against an under-exposed background. Shadows are necessary so don't get panicky and avoid them, for without shadows one cannot perceive the highlights, thus both are necessary to the success of the picture.

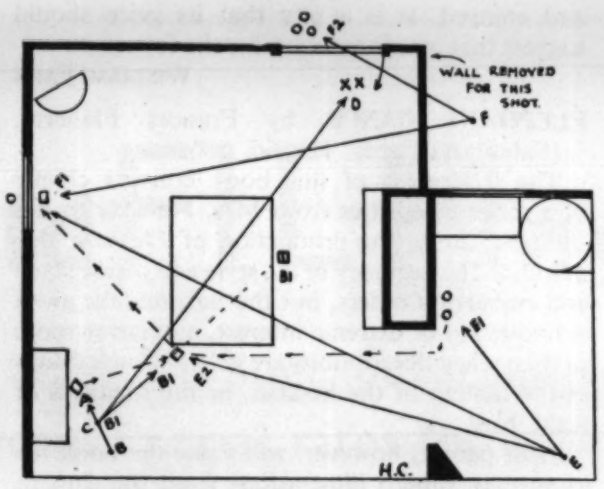
Super Sensitive Panchromatic film should be used for these shots, with the highlights preferably from Photoflood lamps.

Next month the details of revamping the set for the police station, hotel bedroom, village pub, and steel mill manager's office will be dealt with.

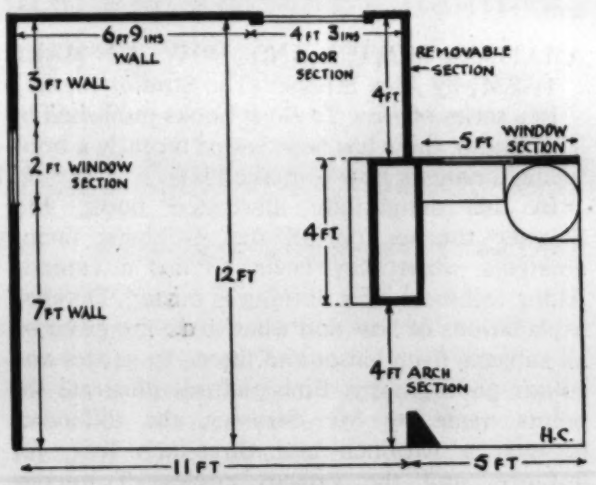
Any questions or criticisms about this series will be welcomed and answered.



(1) Opening sequence camera angles. Scale $\frac{3}{8}$" - 1 ft.



(2) Closing sequence camera angles. Scale $\frac{3}{8}$" - 1 ft.



(3) Key plan. Scale $\frac{3}{8}$" - 1 ft.

Notes :

The human eye is so sensitive that it can differentiate a variation in illumination intensity of the order of about the constant fraction of 0.01.

Well, what of it? Only this: don't be misled by the salesman's lumen story, judge the light from a projector by comparison with another, and take the best.

* * * *

Speaking of light, a new condenser will shortly be available in this country for use with the B. & H. 16 mm. machines, known as the "Magnilite." It will increase the projection illumination by 35 per cent and simply slides into the existing auxiliary slot in the condenser housing chamber.

Use of Kodachrome in Daylight

Your correspondent, J. Masterton, in the May issue of *W.F.N.*, expresses an opinion that the average amateur does not use artificial light when using Kodachrome *owing to the high cost*, and is therefore forced to rely on daylight.

I have to join issue with him on these points, as my experience has been that the 'average amateur' will probably use his first film of Kodachrome in daylight, but after seeing the processed film, will immediately decide that in future he will use Kodachrome 'A' in artificial light, as he will then have the lighting under local control, and it is possible to film quite satisfactorily using four Photofloods in reflectors—the cost of which would only be 30*s*.

Using Kodachrome in daylight calls for much experience, either in judging exposures—even with the aid of the Kodachrome charts—or the intelligent use of an exposure meter, and even then one cannot just point the meter at the subject and, having obtained the setting of the diaphragm, just fire away. It's not so simple as that. One must—if one requires correct colour renderings—take readings from all the variously coloured surfaces and, providing the readings are within reasonably small limits, decide on a mean aperture.

However, one rarely encounters that state of affairs, it being more normal for one to find tremendous variations, a case in point being the recent Coronation decorations. Here one is confronted with blue and red giving two entirely different readings, and the white high lights which will give a reading in no way comparable to the blue and red readings.

I would venture to suggest that more than half the colour films of the Coronation decorations have the same characteristic fault, viz., reds a muddy brown, and blues "washed out," with the whites absolutely devoid of detail.

I have found—by experiment and observation—that the tendency with exterior Kodachrome film is under-exposure and lack of colour planning. Why will some people try to take a girl with, say, a dark blue jacket, white jumper, grey skirt, "pink and white" complexion, red lipstick and "blonde" hair, sitting on a green lawn nursing a black and tan puppy, and then grumble if they don't get correct rendering of all the colours.

It just can't be done. The results have to be seen to be believed and, as on an average day the light conditions are constantly variable, a successful shot is more luck than judgment.

For general exterior work—providing exaggerated contrasts are avoided—I have found that the following film speeds are suitable for exposure meter settings when using Kodachrome film.

Meter Type	*Weston Universal Model 650*	*Bewi Photoskop Tempophot Tempiphot*	*Avo Hod Drinsen Hod*	*Electro-drem*	*Zeiss Helios Bleudux Sixtus Quitrux*
Meter Speed Settings	4	15	200	21	18

GEORGE R. COOPER

BOOK REVIEWS

FOOTNOTES TO THE FILM, edited by Charles Davy. With 32 illustrations. (Lovat Dickson, 18*s*.)

"How much I like films I like—but I could like films better. I like being distracted, flattered, tickled, even rather upset—but I should not mind something more; I should like something serious. I should like to be changed by more films, as art can change one: I should like something to happen when I go to the cinema." So ends Elizabeth Bowen's no-brow expression of why she goes to the cinema, what she likes and what she would like to have the opportunity of liking. And what she would like to like, the film makers who contribute to this book would, with one accord, like to be allowed to give her. They too would like something to happen to the cinema. Hitchcock would like to be allowed, just for once, to finish a film the way he conceived it, make a film that was too terrifying for some audiences, meet to-morrow half a dozen people who could write good stories for British films. Donat, Graham Greene and Basil Dean, too, diagnose this lack as one of the prime causes of our present discontents.

Additional to the individual interest of the several contributions to this book is the agreement—sometimes expressed in almost identical phrases—between the authors, although so far as one can judge, they were not attempting to write to a common theme. Between Hitchcock, Wright and Betjeman on the use of the camera and its relation to the settings and the actors. Between them and Donat and Basil Dean on the relation of cinema to the stage. Between these five and Jaubert and Paul Nash, writing on the proper use of music and colour. Between all of these and Grierson, producer and director, Graham Greene, story writer and critic, and Bernstein, exhibitor, on the proper subject matter of the cinema and the insane neglect by the modern cinema as a whole, and most of all in the British film studios, of "fresh air and real people."

That something could happen in the cinema these writers would almost persuade us. That such "somethings" have happened they remind us. Chaplin, Griffith, Clair and Disney have been; we have seen *Nanook*, *Caligari*, *Mr. Deeds*, *Pasteur*, *Night Mail* and *The March of Time*. These and others, from Lumière who was in the beginning to *The Good Earth*, have shown how the cinema might become, as Charles Davy puts it, "an art realistic, poetic and popular—realistic in its subject-matter, poetic in its final utterance and popular in its range of appeal." But Lord Tyrrell says "No controversy" and Big Business says, "It's not Box-Office." What is to break the power of the "artifices, inhibitions, inferiorities, snobberies, censorships, alien controls and misguided party-political interventions" which cramp the development of the British cinema to-day? It might be Korda if his visions and good intentions were tempered with that practical sense which Maurice Kann says Hollywood has and Shepherd's Bush lacked. It might be the film critics if they were as free from inhibitions, cant and corruption as Alistair Cooke would have them. It might be the public itself if censorship could be circumvented, if only as Cavalcanti suggests in comedies, if Film Societies had the freedom Forsyth Hardy claims for them; if every exhibitor tried as hard as Bernstein to understand and serve his patrons.

One hope above all others there should be—in the schools and educational institutions throughout Great Britain. There by the use of educational films and by placing film appreciation on a level with dramatic, literary and musical appreciation, could be trained the desire for realism, truth, and beauty which would make worth while films commercially worth while. But when you read R. S. Lambert's account of the present neglect of this opportunity you may still wonder if you will live to see the day when something happens when you go to the cinema.

This book should and ought to be widely read and enjoyed. It is a pity that its price should suggest that its contents are for the few.

WILLIAM FARR

ELEPHANT DANCE, by Frances Flaherty. (Faber and Faber, 12s. 6d. net).

The letterpress of this book consists chiefly of a series of epistles from Mrs. Flaherty to her children during the production of *Elephant Boy* in India. The intimacy of the style will please some and embarrass others, but the information given is frequently of extreme interest, and never more so than when descriptions are given of such things as the filming of the keddah, or the madness of Kala Nag.

Most people, however, will value the book for its seventy superb illustrations from the camera of Mrs. Flaherty or her daughter. These have the genuine quality of India, and most of them are masterly examples of camera technique. The book is well got up and the reproduction values excellent. C.M.

AMATEUR MOVIES AND HOW TO MAKE THEM, by Alex Strasser (The Studio, 7s. 6d.).

In a series of *How To Do It* books published by The Studio, there has been issued recently a book telling amateurs how to make films.

In this delightfully illustrated book, Mr. Strasser touches on all the problems facing amateurs when they begin to use a camera. Along technical lines nothing is missed. Detailed explanations of how and what to do are given on all subjects from lenses and filters, to gauzes and colour photography. Fine pictures illustrate the points made by Mr. Strasser, the difference between a two-inch and three-inch lens, for instance, and the various circles of interest within any given subject.

Any amateur who really studies this book should surely avoid wastage of film and time, and many disappointments. E.S.

THE COMPLETE PROJECTIONIST (Odham's Technical Press, 5s. 4d. post free).

In this second and revised edition of *The Complete Projectionist*, by R. H. Cricks, F.R.P.S., the amateur cinematographer has a wealth of valuable information.

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